

# Sehome Neighborhood

Bellingham, Washington

## Historic Resource Survey Report



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## **Disclosure**

The activity that is the subject of this publication has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, as provided through the Washington State Historic Preservation Office. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the view of policies of the Department of the Interior, nor does the mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

*Front Cover Photo: Looking northwest from the Trezise Apartments at 806 High Street, circa 1925.*

Unless otherwise noted, all historic photographs in this report are provided courtesy of the Whatcom Museum Photo Archives, 201 Prospect Street. Located in the Syre Education Center (former fire station next to Old City Hall), the Whatcom Museum Photo Archives are open to the public between 1:00 - 5:00 pm Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and by appointment at other times.

Prints of historic photographs can be purchased through the Photo Archives -- for more information contact Jeff Jewell, Photo Archivist at [jjjewell@cob.org](mailto:jjjewell@cob.org) or (360) 778-8952.

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# PROJECT SUMMARY

In January 2013 Historic Preservation Northwest (HPNW) undertook a reconnaissance-level historic resource survey and inventory (the Project) of 353 properties located in the Sehome Neighborhood in Bellingham, Washington. The Project was sponsored by the City of Bellingham's Planning and Community Development Department, and addressed only above-grade, built environment historic properties.

The Project forwards the City's goal of establishing a comprehensive inventory within Bellingham's historic neighborhoods, documenting and evaluating properties that are 50 years or older. The Project also provides an important planning tool for the City of Bellingham, as well as the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP). All survey and inventory information resides in the Washington State Historic Property Inventory (HPI) database, accessible to the public via the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) web portal. Findings and recommendations resulting from the Project are summarized in the report, as well as preliminary determinations of eligibility for buildings that meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Inventory information is also available via the City of Bellingham's Geographic Information System (GIS) at the Planning and Community Development Department.

All survey work, completion of inventory forms, and preparation of the Survey and Inventory Report followed the guidelines in the "Historic Property Inventory Guide and Database Use Manual" and the "Washington State Standards for Cultural Resource Reporting" published by DAHP.

A historic resource survey of Bellingham's Central Business District (CBD) completed in 2012 included a portion of the Sehome Neighborhood along Holly and Forest Streets. In early 2000, the Sehome Hill National Historic District was surveyed, nominated, and then designated in 2001. With the completion of the Sehome Neighborhood historic resource survey, combined with information from previous projects, the entire neighborhood survey will be complete.

The main goal of the Project was to survey and inventory the historic resources within the neighborhood that were not covered by the 2012 Central Business District survey and are not contained within the Sehome Hill Historic District that was established in 2001. However, the buildings within the historic district were photographed as part of the current survey in order to have a digital image available for the City of Bellingham's and Washington State's databases.

Funding was provided, in part, by a Certified Local Government Grant from the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and by the City of Bellingham.

## **PROJECT BOUNDARIES**

The Sehome Neighborhood name goes back to the original town of Sehome, which was platted in 1854 and incorporated in 1888. The early town of Sehome was one of four independent settlements that developed along Bellingham Bay: Whatcom, Sehome, Bellingham, and Fairhaven. The towns of Fairhaven and Bellingham incorporated in 1889 under the name "Fairhaven," and Sehome re-incorporated as New Whatcom that same year. In 1891, it then joined with Whatcom under the name "New Whatcom" (later dropping the "New"). In 1903, Fairhaven and Whatcom consolidated to become the City of Bellingham.

The Sehome Neighborhood is defined by both natural and man-made boundaries. To the southwest, the neighborhood wraps around Sehome Hill, a steep bedrock formation rising 650 feet from Bellingham Bay, and borders the South Hill Neighborhood at Cedar Street. Boulevard Street and the northwest side of North Forest Street form the northwestern boundary, and East Holly, Ellis, and East Maple Streets bordering the York Neighborhood form the eastern and northeastern boundaries. Interstate 5 at the eastern edge and the Bill McDonald Parkway to the south complete the neighborhood boundary. The neighborhood has an assortment of land use designations including multi-family residential, single family residential, commercial, public, and urban village.

## **PROJECT TEAM**

HPNW personnel working on the Project included David Pinyerd, Bernadette Niederer, Lynette Felber, and Kolby LaBree. Pinyerd, Niederer, and Felber all hold master's degrees in history and/or historic preservation and exceed the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for History and Architectural History full-time work experience.

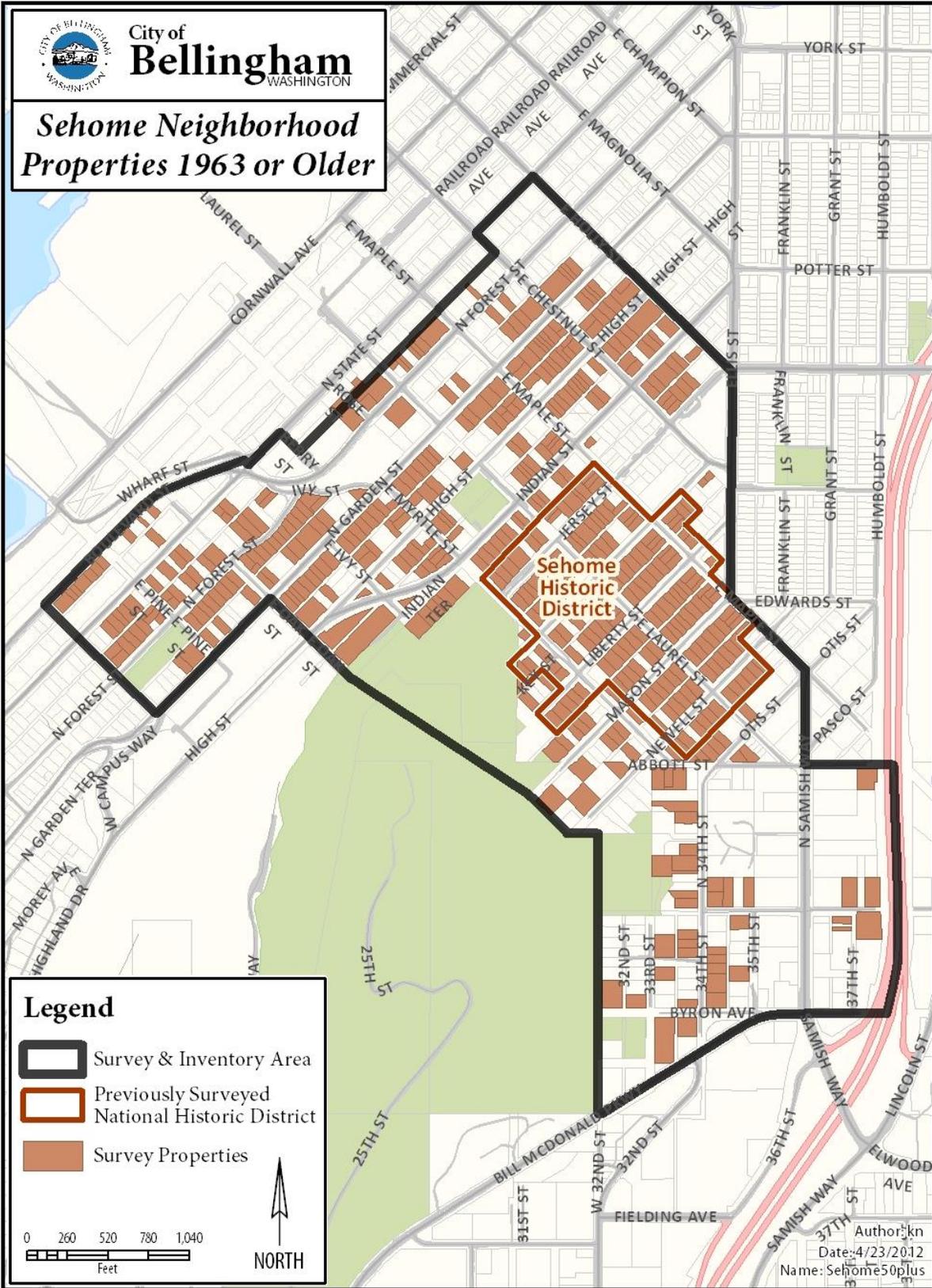
The City's Project team included Katie Franks, Project Manager, and Kate Newell, GIS Analyst, both with the Planning and Community Development Department. Jeff Jewell, Photo Archivist with the Whatcom Museum Photo Archives, provided valuable photograph access, use, guidance, and frequent assistance on questions pertaining to the history, development, and the historic buildings of Bellingham.

Many thanks go to City of Bellingham Intern Brent Bode, who provided invaluable assistance in photographing ancillary outbuildings from alleyways.



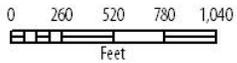
City of  
**Bellingham**  
WASHINGTON

*Sehome Neighborhood  
Properties 1963 or Older*



**Legend**

-  Survey & Inventory Area
-  Previously Surveyed National Historic District
-  Survey Properties



Author: kn  
Date: 4/23/2012  
Name: Sehome50plus

## PREVIOUS SURVEYS

The most recent survey of the Central Business District in 2012 included the commercial resources located in the Sehome Neighborhood's northwest and northeast edges. There was also a survey undertaken in the creation of the Sehome Hill Historic District (2001).

### **Commercial Buildings of the Central Business District of Bellingham, WA, 1882-1915 MPD**

The 2003 Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) contains a concentration of commercial buildings located in Bellingham's CBD, the core-commercial area of what was historically known as the town of New Whatcom, which was formed through the consolidation of the towns of Whatcom and Sehome. The period of significance (1882-1915) includes two historic contexts that define Bellingham's commercial development within the CBD: Railroad Speculation and its Effect on the Early Towns of Bellingham, 1882 - 1900; and Consolidation and Commercial Growth of Bellingham's Central Business District, 1900 - 1915. As of 2012, six commercial properties have been listed to the NRHP under this MPD.

### **National Register of Historic Places Nominations**

Four properties in the Sehome Neighborhood are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Donovan House (built 1890) at 1201 North Garden Street, the Morse House (built 1895) at 1014 North Garden Street, the YWCA Building (built 1915) at 1026 North Forest Street, and the Hotel Laube (built 1903) at 1226 North State Street.

The Sehome Hill National Historic District was listed in 2001, and is generally bound by Sehome Hill to the southwest, the alley between Jersey and Indian Streets to the northwest, East Maple Street to the northeast, and the alley between Newell and Otis Streets to the southeast. There are 153 contributing properties within the Sehome Hill Historic District boundaries. As part of the citizen-led National Register district nomination process, properties in the district were researched and documented in *"At Home on the Hill: A Historical Album of an Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Neighborhood on Sehome Hill,"* which is available at local bookstores and the Bellingham Library.

### **Other Historic Register Nominations**

Additional properties not listed on the National Register but listed on State or Local Bellingham Historic Registers are the Montague House at 1030 North Garden Street (Washington State Heritage Register) and the First Church of Christ Scientists at 1027 North Forest Street (Bellingham Register Historic of Historic Places).

### **HPI Upload**

In 2011-2012 Artifacts Consulting, Inc. uploaded assessor property data to the DAHP's online HPI database for buildings built in or before 1969 within Certified Local Governments, the goal being to establish a baseline data set of existing buildings. For the City of Bellingham this included, as available, historic Whatcom County assessor photographs and forms.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Historic Preservation Northwest (HPNW) was hired by the City of Bellingham to complete a historic resource survey and inventory of the Sehome Neighborhood, excluding areas that had been surveyed in 2012 as part of the Central Business District project, and properties within the existing Sehome Hill National Historic District.

On February 26, 2013, the HPNW team composed of David Pinyerd, Bernadette Niederer, Lynette Felber, and Kolby LaBree started on phase one of the Project, a reconnaissance, or “windshield survey.” All of the principal buildings in the survey area were evaluated as to construction date, and those found to date to before 1965 were photographed. For residences within the Sehome Hill Historic District boundaries, photographs were the only form of data collection. For all others, additional data was collected, identifying the type of siding, windows, and foundation, along with a preliminary evaluation of the historic integrity of the building plan, siding, and windows. There were nine examples in which more than one principal structure occupied a tax lot, raising the number of buildings surveyed from 344 to 353. Concurrent with the work of the HPNW survey team, Brent Bode, a Western Washington University intern, was enlisted to photograph auxiliary buildings that appeared to predate 1965 and were only visible from the alleys. The initial windshield survey was completed on February 27th.

With this initial information gathered, data was entered into a database, along with additional findings derived from photo analysis. The additional descriptive fields included roof form, plan shape, and style. Subsequently, survey forms were produced for a “reconnaissance survey” of the 353 resources built before 1965. Reconnaissance survey involves writing a physical description of the property and describing how it has evolved over time. A second round of field work was undertaken on March 21 and 22, 2013. During this phase, all prior data was double-checked and new information was collected, mostly regarding buildings' details. Concurrently, Lynette Felber researched and wrote the historic context for the neighborhood.

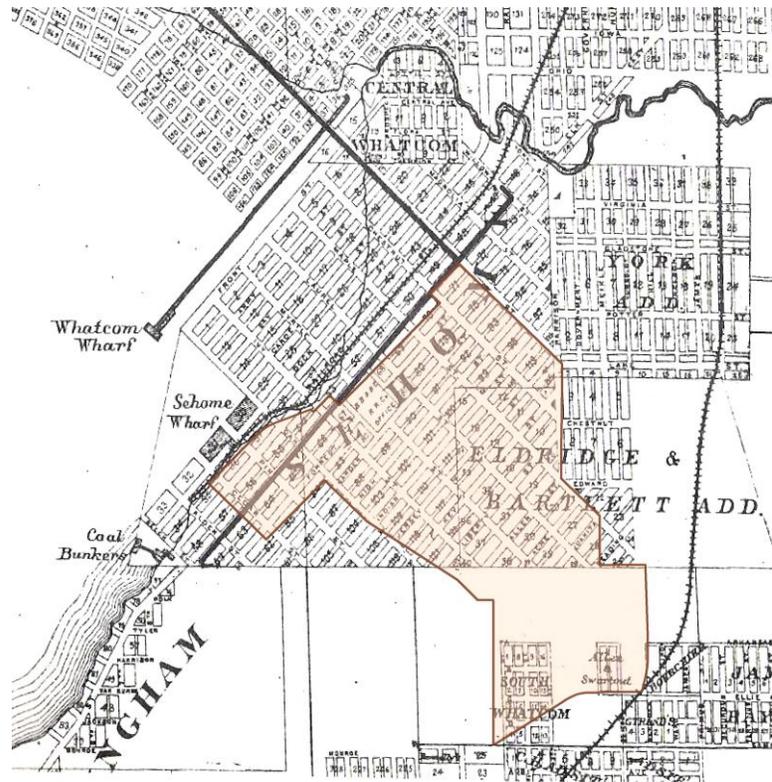
New data was added to the database and physical descriptions were written for each resource. As available, historic information was added to the statements of significance and the database. However, no substantive new research was undertaken on the history of the buildings and their prior owners and inhabitants. The physical descriptions and statements of significance were completed in June 2013. All of the data was gathered into a proprietary Access database that is shared with the City. The subset of that data will be uploaded into the Statewide online database (WISAARD) available for view via the Internet. (Online information does not include current ownership information.) The data was also used for statistical analysis that in turn was used to recommend properties potentially individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and for areas potentially eligible as a National Historic Districts.

**NOTE:** Properties inventoried in the 2012 Central Business District survey along E. Holly and N. Forest Streets have been included in the maps, but not the analytical calculations, of this report.

# HISTORIC CONTEXT

Most of today's Sehome Neighborhood lies within the former town of Sehome, one of four towns that consolidated in 1904 to become the City of Bellingham. (The other early towns were Whatcom to the north, and Fairhaven and Bellingham to the south). Settled in 1854 around the Sehome Mine at the foot of Sehome Hill, the town of Sehome grew slowly around the mining operations of the Bellingham Bay Coal Company. The name "Sehome" was derived from the mine superintendent's Clallam Indian father-in-law, "S'yah-whom."

Mining operations ended in 1878, but a decade later the coal company was reinvented as the Bellingham Bay Improvement Company (BBIC) to capitalize on the extensive mine operation land holdings. In 1890, the BBIC logged Sehome Hill, a town site was cleared, and new streets of Holly, Magnolia, Chestnut, Maple, Laurel, and Rose Streets were cut through the forest and extended east and west, graded and planked. Additional growth was prompted in 1893 when Sehome was chosen by the State of Washington for a western Normal School, today known as Western Washington University (WWU). Gradually the center of the town of Whatcom moved southeast along Holly Street to join the town of Sehome.



1890 map of the Town of Sehome (the shaded area shows the current neighborhood boundary).

In the early 1930s the old Maple Valley Road ran through the lowlands on the eastern side of the neighborhood, and in 1936 became part of Highway 99, also known as Pacific Highway 1, which ran along the West Coast from Mexico to Canada. By the mid-1950s this main route into Bellingham, currently known as Samish Way, was developed with auto-oriented businesses such as gas stations and motels.

A more detailed history is provided in **APPENDIX 4**.



*View looking southwest down Elk Street (today's State Street), Sehome, 1890. Elk Street was wood planked - note that the wagon in foreground is loaded with more planking to fill an exposed area. The Sehome Hotel (upper left) marks the corner of Berry Street.*



*Johnson Motor Service buildings on Old Highway 99 (now Samish Way), circa 1933. (Marlene Hadley photo).*



*Heading North on Samish Way turning into Maple St. in 1946 (Jack Carver photo).*

# FINDINGS

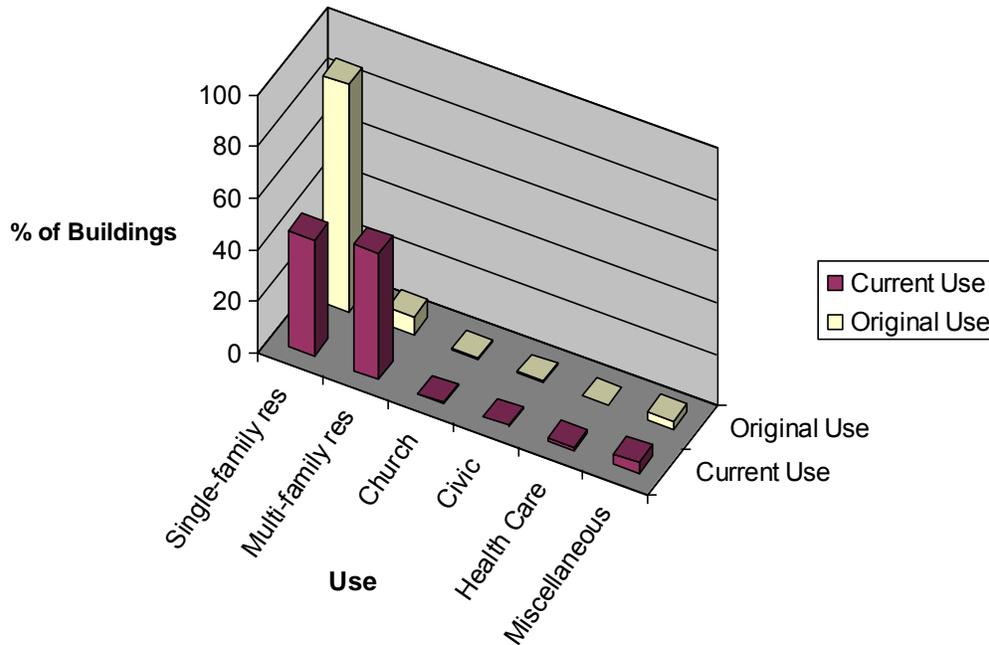
The eclectic character of today's Sehome Neighborhood grew out of the early mining, logging, speculation, and institutional interests that have occurred over the last 150 years. Today, approximately 90% of Sehome is developed, and the population density is among the highest in the City. The dynamic energy resulting from this density complements the distinctive character of the neighborhood, which is defined by its setting, views of natural features, and numerous historic buildings.

Sehome has been home to Bellingham's working-, middle-, and upper middle-class for over 120 years, and the neighborhood's diverse collection of building types, styles, ages, and sizes reflect different building trends throughout this time span. The neighborhood's historic houses range from high-style Victorian-era mansions to middle-class Craftsman-style bungalows and modest cottages of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many historically significant religious, commercial, and multifamily apartment buildings remain in the neighborhood. Along the Samish Way corridor, many mid-20<sup>th</sup> century and post-modern buildings still remain.

731 tax lots exist within the survey area, 186 of which are located in the Sehome Hill Historic District (which was not included in the survey project), leaving 545 tax lots to be surveyed. Based on Whatcom County Tax Assessor records, historical research, and architectural survey experience, of the 545 tax lots, 344 contained structures built before 1966. The remaining 201 tax lots were either vacant or contained buildings constructed after 1965. In addition, 11 tax lots had more than one principal structure, for a total of 353 principal structures built before 1966 recorded. An additional 138 associated structures, such as permanent, stand-alone garages and storage buildings, were found on those tax lots.

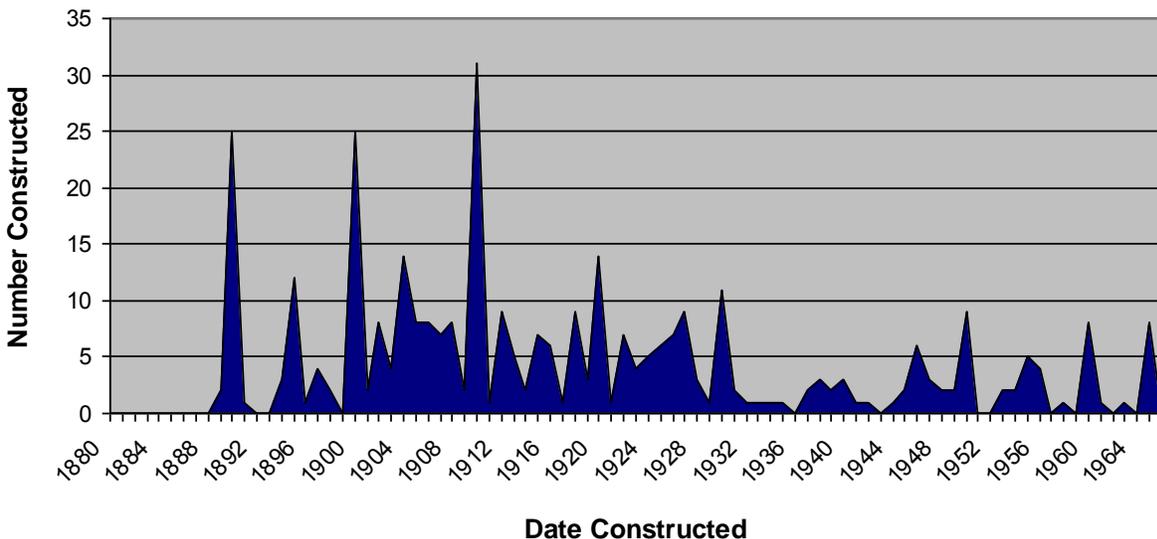
Of the 353 principal structures, there are currently 159 single-family residential, 172 multiple-family residential, one church, two civic, four health care facilities, and 15 miscellaneous buildings. However, the original use of many buildings was somewhat different: 311 single-family residential, 25 multiple-family residential, two churches, two civic, one health care facility, and 12 miscellaneous. This represents a big change in use of the historic buildings over time in the neighborhood, as the chart below shows. The principal change is the conversion of houses from single-family to multi-family use to provide rental housing, in large part, for Western Washington University students. This conversion can happen with little alteration to the exterior of the house; however, often alterations are quite obvious.

## Current Use Versus Original Use



Nearly half of the buildings, 165 of 353, or 47%, were built between 1890 and 1910. The neighborhood became established as a working class community adjacent to the city's downtown, featuring homes of varied sizes and styles, representing the types of houses constructed by Bellingham's middle- and working-class families. The historic buildings in the neighborhood reflect the building trends of the 1890s and early 1900s – renditions of the Queen Anne, Foursquare and Craftsman styles.

## Sehome Inventory Construction Dates



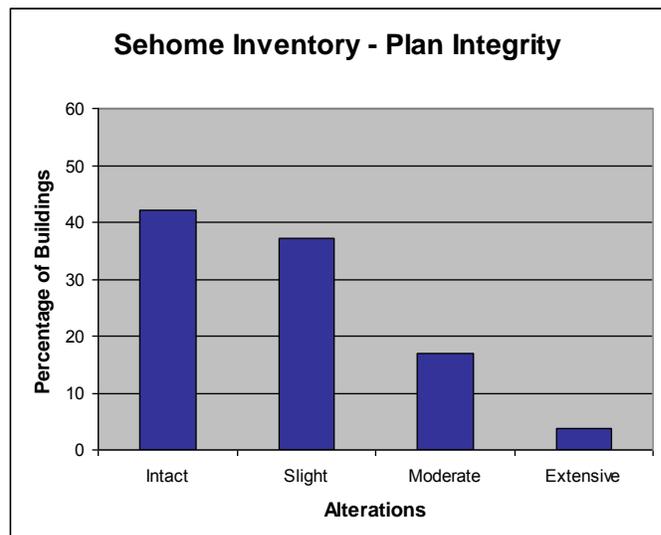
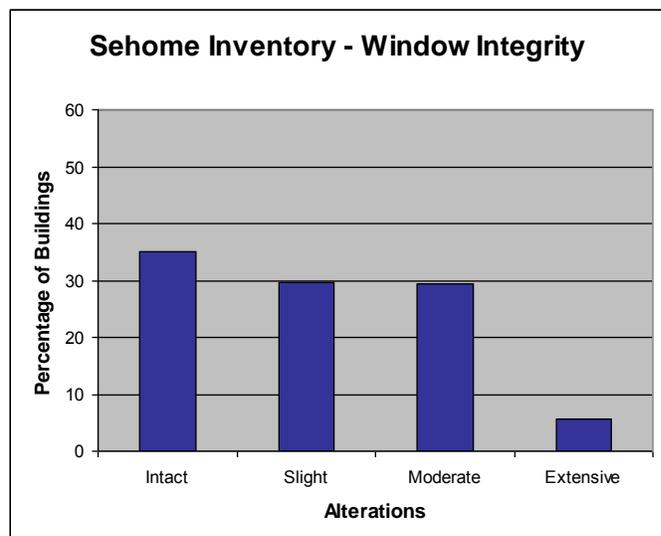
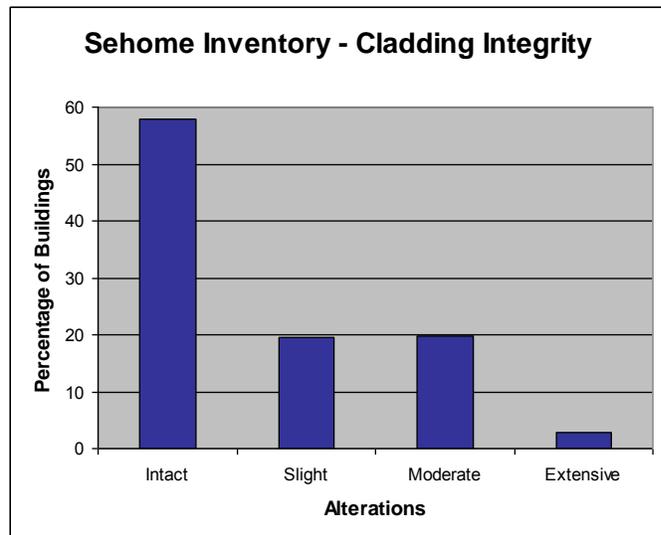
Evaluation of historic integrity was an important part of the survey project. Buildings' key character-defining features were evaluated in three categories: plan, cladding, and windows. Each building was evaluated in each of the three categories as being intact, slightly altered, moderately altered, or extensively altered. Changes to a building's "historic integrity," or level of alteration, were evaluated according to the following table:

<b>A l t e r a t i o n s</b>		<b>Plan</b>	<b>Cladding</b>	<b>Windows</b>
	<b>Intact</b>	There are no apparent additions.	All siding is historic. Partial replacement with compatible material is acceptable, e.g. new wood lap at the foundation. Full replacement with a new compatible material would probably fall into "slight."	All windows are historic. Exact replication of a few windows is acceptable. One incompatible window on a non-visible elevation is acceptable.
	<b>Slight</b>	There are additions (especially historic) to the rear of the building or small, compatible newer additions, e.g. a new dormer with compatible massing and styling.	Siding replaced with compatible material, especially early in the building's history (e.g. drop to lap siding). Minor incompatible replacements, e.g. T-1-11 foundation skirting.	Several non-historic windows on non-visible elevations are acceptable. One non-historic window on a visible elevation is allowed. Near exact replication of most windows is acceptable.
	<b>Moderate</b>	There are additions to the sides of the building that are visible from the front and change the overall building mass.	Partial siding replacement with non-compatible material, e.g. vinyl on first floor, wood on second floor.	All windows have been replaced while keeping the same openings and same window configuration. Full vinyl window replacement leaving window openings intact and matching sash configuration would be here.
	<b>Extensive</b>	There are major additions on the front and sides or to the building's height and roof structure. The building is barely recognizable as a historic structure.	All siding replaced/ covered with metal or vinyl veneer. Historic siding replacement with material that is substantially different visually from original, e.g. Queen Anne building with combed wood shingle or asbestos shingle.	All windows have been replaced without regard to window configuration or openings.

One of the most important historical research tools for revealing building alterations is the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. Sanborn maps provide a building footprint and invaluable construction material information. Sanborn made maps in parts of the survey area as early as 1890 (New Whatcom), and provided updates up until 1950. By comparing the Sanborns to current aerials and examining the buildings from streets and alleys, very few buildings were found to be extensively altered in plan: only 13 out of 353 (or 4%). Alterations had been made, but many of the plans were either intact or only slightly altered (280 or 79%). Additions made to the rear of buildings, and high quality additions that have been well integrated into the original building, add to the high percentage of intact plans.

Integrity of building cladding (i.e., siding) was found to be good. Out of 353 resources, 273 properties (or 78%) were found to have intact or slightly altered siding. Only 90 buildings had moderate to extensive siding alterations, which may be due to a large number of rental properties in the neighborhood retaining and repairing siding material rather than replacing it. Regardless, the neighborhood still has its share of non-historic asbestos, metal, vinyl, and cementitious sidings.

The windows in the survey area were also found to have relatively high integrity, with many buildings retaining their original windows. Again, this may be due to ongoing maintenance or replacement of windows in-kind. Of 273 resources, 229 (65%) were found to have intact to slightly altered windows. Altered windows were mainly vinyl window replacements, as well as bronzed aluminum sliders. There were 20 resources (or 6%) with extensively altered windows.



# EVALUATION

This section presents an overview of surveyed properties, and analyzes information collected during field work. For the purposes of this report, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria have been used for the evaluation process.

Two additional historic registers, the Washington State Heritage Register (WHR) and the Bellingham Register of Historic Places (BRHP), are available for owners of historic properties in Bellingham. Like the National Register, the WHR is an honorary designation. More information about the WHR can be found on the DAHP website at [www.dahp.wa.gov/washington-heritage-register](http://www.dahp.wa.gov/washington-heritage-register). The BRHP, established through a Local Historic Preservation Ordinance (BMC 17.90), requires adherence to certain regulations, but also offers financial and other benefits for listed properties. More information about the BRHP can be found on the City website at <http://www.cob.org/services/planning/historic/index.aspx>.

*NOTE: All properties eligible for the NRHP are assumed to be eligible for the WHR and BRHP.*

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES ELIGIBILITY

The NRHP is the official recognition by the U.S. government of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Designation through the National Register offers protection to a district or property only in cases where the threatening action involves a “federal undertaking.” If the federal government is not involved, then the listing on the National Register provides the property or district no protections. Listing on the National Register does not restrict a private property owner from altering or demolishing an individually listed, or in the case of a district, a contributing or non-contributing resource.

The NRHP establishes four basic criteria by which the level of a resource’s contribution to the nation’s cultural heritage can be gauged. These are then qualified by the level at which they contribute: local, statewide, and national. These criteria dictate that resources:

- A: Be associated with events** that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B: Be associated with the lives** of persons significant in our past; or
- C: Embody the distinctive characteristics** of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D: Are likely to yield information** important to our understanding of prehistory or history.

The determinations of eligibility were made by HPNW as a “point in time,” cursory estimation. Changes made to buildings over time may result in a building becoming eligible, or ineligible, for listing. The National Park Service makes the formal determination on eligibility for National Register listing. The DAHP makes the formal determination on eligibility for WHR listing, and the City of Bellingham’s Historic Preservation Commission makes the formal determination for BRHP eligibility.

The structure for analysis references the National Register Bulletin “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.” Further recommended readings include National Register bulletins on specific property types. These bulletins are available through the National Register of Historic Places Program on the National Park Service webpage:

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/>

### **Areas of Significance**

Areas of significance are defined by the NRHP as the “aspect of history in which a... property, through use, occupation, physical character, or association, influenced the development or identity of its community or region.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Period of Significance**

The NRHP defines the period of significance as “the span of time when a property was associated with important events, activities, persons, cultural groups, and land uses or attained important physical qualities or characteristics.” These periods can include one or more isolated events, a series, or continuity of activities. In addition to periods of significance, the general minimum of 50 years of age for listing to the NRHP was used to guide eligibility recommendations.

## **Assessment of Historic Integrity**

Historic integrity can be thought of as the level of authenticity of a resource. It refers to the intactness of historic form and original construction materials. As such, integrity is integral to a resource’s ability to convey its historic significance. Alterations, whether historic or contemporary, were examined for compatibility. “Condition” of a historic resource should not be confused with historic integrity. Condition is generally defined as “state of repair.” In other words, a building can be in poor condition, but retain a high degree of historic integrity.

### **Seven Criteria for Evaluating Historic Integrity**

The NRHP defines integrity as the ability of a property to convey its significance, and measures integrity by applying seven criteria: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

There must be identifiable evidence in all or some of the following aspects of integrity for a historic resource to be considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Some aspects are more important than others in conveying significance, and these are determined on an individual basis. The seven aspects of integrity are

- 1. Location** refers to the physical components occupying the same locations upon which they were built. Exceptions to this can be buildings moved during the period of significance for institution-related functions.
- 2. Design** involves the planning of the site, including the placement and layout of circulation networks, land uses and activities, water systems, buildings, structures, and objects.

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<sup>1</sup> “Guidelines for Evaluating And Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes,” National Register Bulletin 30.

3. **Setting** encompasses the physical environment that exists with regard to a historic building, site, structure, object, or landscape. Changes in vistas, topography, and vegetation are some of the variables to consider when evaluating setting.
4. **Integrity of materials** extends not only to the typical items such as building materials, but also to the physical material of a site's vegetation related to land uses and activities.
5. **Workmanship** speaks to the manner in which people build the functional and decorative elements of their environment. The quality of construction and materials, or rather the changes in those factors in a given property, may indicate when alterations/renovations occurred.
6. The **feeling** generated by a property's physical components represents those intangible experiences characterizing its identity. Components include view corridors, vistas, scale, and design of the buildings, landscaping, and the ability to move along historic circulation networks.
7. **Associations** represent those connections between a property's physical components and the functions associated with the period of significance. These associations remain the strongest through the presence of extant historic building and continuation of original use and/or ownership, such as residences which remain under domestic use.

Generally speaking, the historic properties surveyed for the Project exhibited varying degrees of integrity as related to the seven criteria listed above. Most buildings retain integrity of location, but there was great variety among buildings according to the other six criteria. Alterations observed in the field were recorded in the HPI forms and factored into NRHP eligibility consideration.

## ELIGIBILITY for NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Buildings were evaluated as to whether they had sufficient historic integrity to be listed individually, or as a resource contributing to a National Historic District.

Several buildings surveyed appear to be eligible for individual listing on the National Register under **Criterion C: Architecture**. A complete list of potentially eligible properties is included in **APPENDIX 2**.

510 N State Street	The rectory of the former Church of the Assumption
512 N State Street	William and Elizabeth Roehl House
525 N State Street	Washington National Guard Armory
620 N State Street	Hans and Clara Pearson House
700 N Forest Street	Colley Bornstein House
505 N Garden Street	Schermerhorn Apartments
1020 N Garden Street	Julius H. Bloedel House
1031 N Garden Street	First Presbyterian Church
806 High Street	Molly Trezise Apartments
1011 High Street	Kulshan Apartments
519 E Ivy Street	Residence
421 E Maple Street	Alamo Apartments
519 E Maple Street	First Presbyterian Church
513 E Myrtle Street	Residence



*Some buildings, like the First Presbyterian Church, 519 E Maple St., were evaluated to be individually eligible for listing on the National Register. Photo by Joy Keenan.*

## ELIGIBILITY for NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: DISTRICTS

A historic district is a group of buildings, properties, or sites that have been designated as historically and/or architecturally significant. Buildings, structures, objects, and sites within a historic district are divided into two categories: contributing and non-contributing. Districts greatly vary in size, some having hundreds of structures while others have just a few.

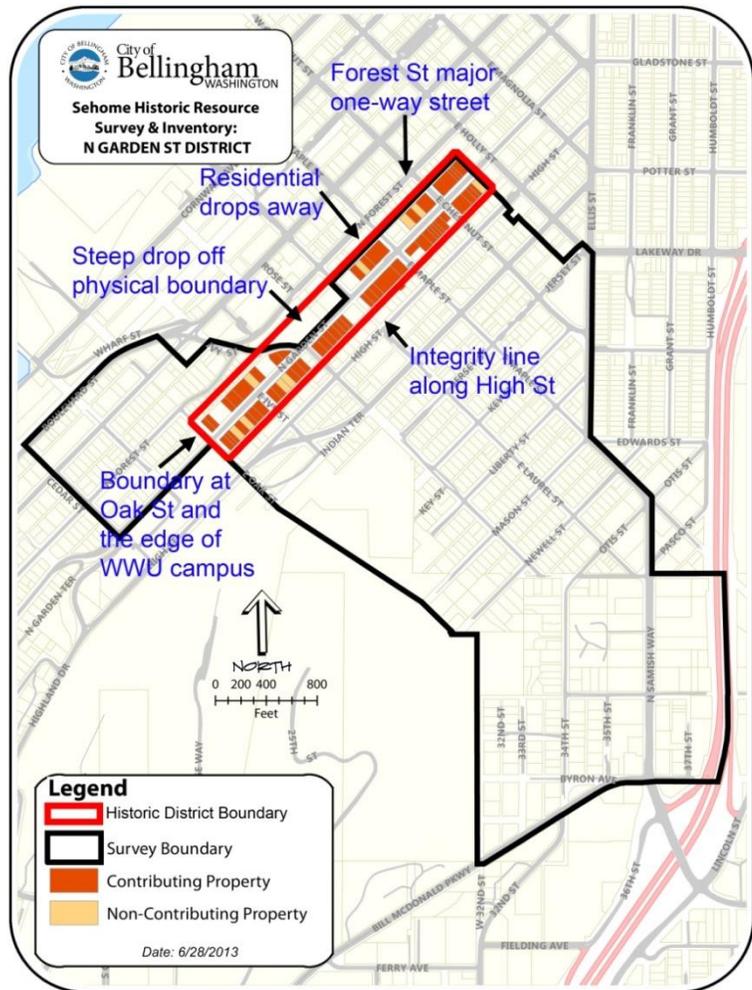
To make a preliminary decision about contributing and non-contributing resources in a historic district, we used an objective algorithm based on the table on page 13:

1. If constructed after 1945, a building was considered “non-contributing” to a district. This seemingly arbitrary date defines a strong change in house styles, construction methods, and land use in the post-WWII era.
2. If a building had “extensive” alterations in any of the three categories of integrity, it would be considered non-contributing to a district.
3. If the building had “moderate” alterations in two or more categories, say moderate alterations to windows and cladding, then the structure would be considered non-contributing to a district.
4. However, a non-contributing building could be “elevated” to contributing if history were uncovered for a significant individual or event that occurred at the property.

Cursory analysis at this point in time reveals a potential National Historic District on North Garden Street. Additional research and change over time could alter the extent, boundaries, and contributing resources of this potential district.

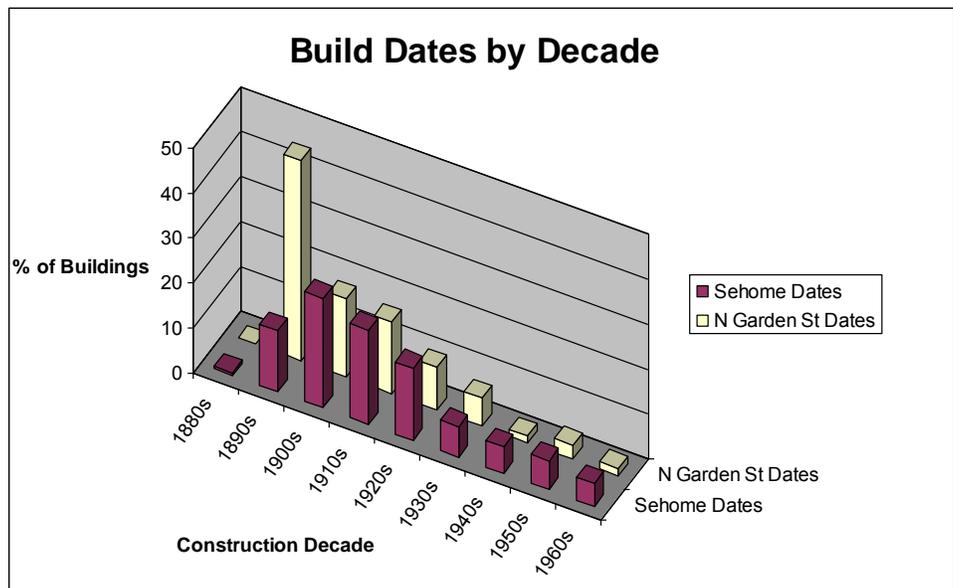
Coupled with contribution are four district boundary descriptors: historical, physical, temporal, and integrity. We try to find **historical** boundaries for a district, a place traditionally defined by history, such as “downtown.” In the Sehome Neighborhood, that would be the area known as “Sehome.” However, the area surveyed surrounds the existing Sehome Hill Historic District and is basically downhill from it. We try to find **physical** boundaries for a district, such as a river or highway. In Sehome, we only have the bay and the steep terrain to the east so this boundary definer is the weakest of the four. **Temporal** boundaries outline areas that show development occurring around the same time, such as a subdivision. In Sehome Neighborhood, the construction spike centered on 1900 is a good sign of a temporal boundary. And **integrity** can be used to separate an area of low physical integrity from one of higher integrity.

Looking at the four boundary determiners, a potential historic district begins to appear along the North Garden Street corridor in the Sehome Neighborhood. As the map above shows, all four boundary descriptors can be used to define a historic district along North Garden Street. The historical boundary would be formed by the boundary of Oak Street on the southwest, the physical and historical boundary of Forest Street on the northwest, the physical and historical boundary of Holly Street on the northeast, and the integrity boundary of High Street on the southeast.



Oak Street marks the beginning of the Western Washington University campus, a historical boundary that marks a transition from residential to institutional use. Forest Street is a physical barrier as it is a two-lane, one-way street. The resources along Forest Street are mainly non-residential and provide a historical use change from the resources along Garden Street. Holly Street is also a physical barrier – like Forest Street, it is a two-lane, one-way street. The southeast boundary line runs along the alley between Garden and High Streets. The integrity of the housing stock along High Street is not as intact as that along Garden Street with more post-1965 resources. The construction dates for the houses along North Garden Street are more focused around the 1890s than the rest of the inventory area as shown on the chart, below:

The consistency of construction date makes the houses along North Garden Street a more cohesive group than other areas within the survey area.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

After completing analysis on the types and condition of historic buildings in the Sehome Neighborhood, HPNW submits the following recommendations to the City:

1. Sponsor, encourage, and/or nominate individual properties and historic district(s) within the Sehome Neighborhood to the NRHP; and
2. Encourage private property owners to nominate individual properties and historic district(s) within the Sehome Neighborhood to the BRHP.
3. It is also recommended that a National Register Historic District be formed in a portion of the Sehome Neighborhood. The district’s boundaries would be a rectangle taking in both sides of North Garden Street from Oak Street to just short of Holly Street as described in the previous section. The **period of significance** would be defined as **1890 to 1941**. The range is from the oldest houses in the neighborhood to the precipitous drop in construction with World War II. This period takes into account the major development in the potential district between 1890 and 1920.

The North Garden Street Historic District is potentially eligible for the National Register under **Criterion A** as a cohesive residential street that represents a broad pattern of the social and economic history of Bellingham. As such, the district represents a cross culture of individuals, both famous and ordinary, whose skills and talents contributed to the development and growth of the city. The early residents included business proprietors, industrial employees, government officials, and independent trade people, all living in a close knit neighborhood.

The district would also be eligible under **Criterion C** as an area that embodies the distinctive characteristics of residential development in Bellingham. Many of the dwellings represent the work of a master craftsmen and/or architect, and a majority of the resources possess high artistic values representing significant characteristics of architectural styles popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The North Garden Street Historic District would be an intact residential neighborhood concentrated around 1900. There are 731 tax lots in the Sehome Neighborhood. The proposed district boundaries take in 63 resources (9%). The period of significance is represented by 60 of the 63 resources (95%). Of the 63 resources, 54 (86%) would be **contributing**, 6 (10%) **historic non-contributing**, and 3 (4%) **non-historic non-contributing**. In addition to residential, the proposed district has one church and one health care facility.

The **54 contributing** addresses in the North Garden Street Historic District within the proposed boundaries at this point in time would include the following:

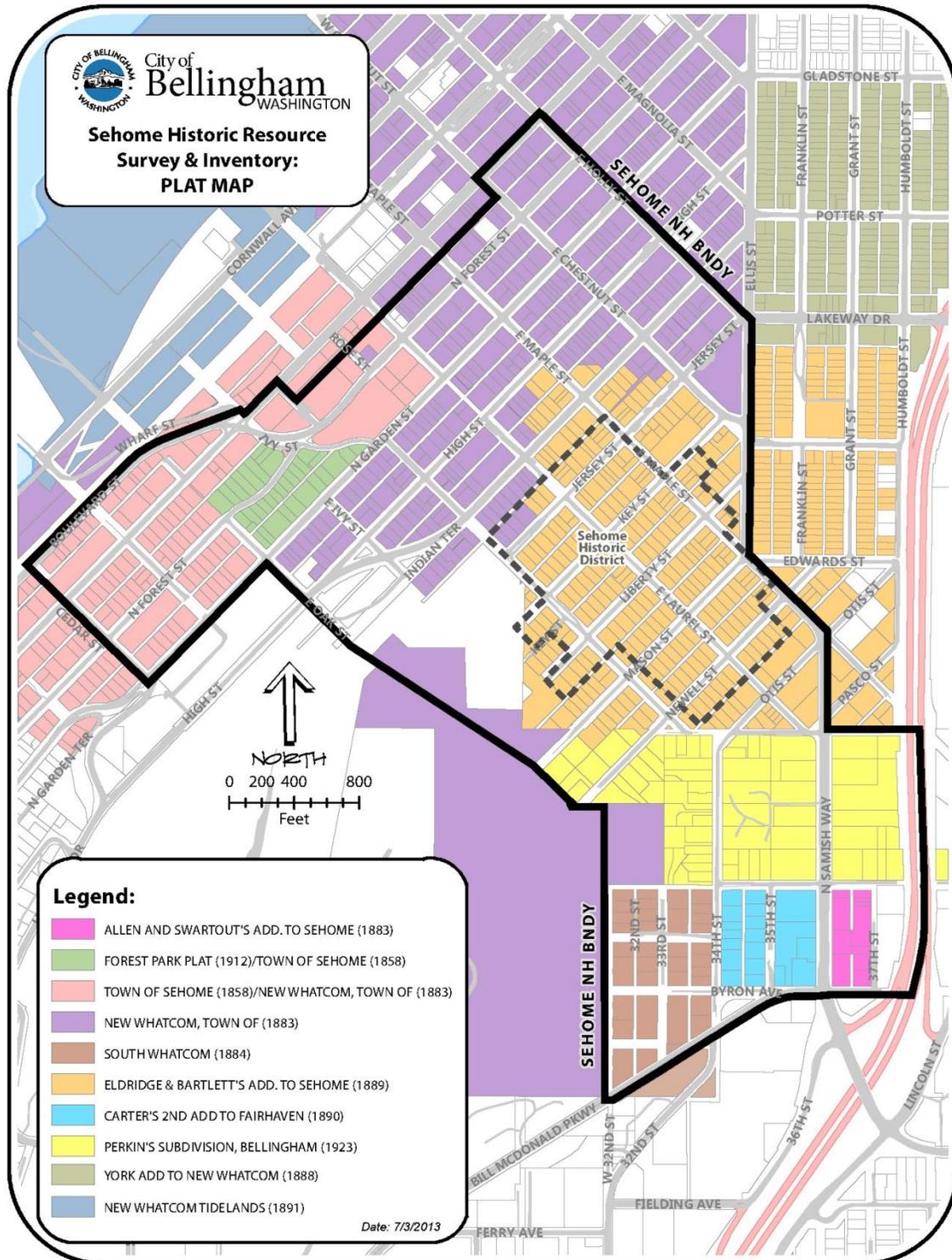
700 N GARDEN ST	730 N GARDEN ST	910 N GARDEN ST	1020 N GARDEN ST
701 N GARDEN ST	800 N GARDEN ST	914 N GARDEN ST	1030 N GARDEN ST
703 N GARDEN ST	805 N GARDEN ST	916 N GARDEN ST	1031 N GARDEN ST
704 N GARDEN ST	806 N GARDEN ST	920 N GARDEN ST	1106 N GARDEN ST
706 N GARDEN ST	815 N GARDEN ST	922 N GARDEN ST	1108 N GARDEN ST
714 N GARDEN ST	818 N GARDEN ST	1002 N GARDEN ST	1116 N GARDEN ST
719 N GARDEN ST	822 N GARDEN ST	1006 N GARDEN ST	1117 N GARDEN ST
720 N GARDEN ST	823-825 N GARDEN ST	1010 N GARDEN ST	1118 N GARDEN ST
723-725 N GARDEN ST	826-828 N GARDEN ST	1011 N GARDEN ST	1120 N GARDEN ST
724 N GARDEN ST	900 N GARDEN ST	1014 N GARDEN ST	1122 N GARDEN ST
727 N GARDEN ST	906 N GARDEN ST	1019 N GARDEN ST	

1124-1126 N GARDEN ST	1201 N GARDEN ST	1213 N GARDEN ST
1127 N GARDEN ST	1208-1210 N GARDEN	1214 N GARDEN ST
1130 N GARDEN ST	ST	1215 N GARDEN ST
1200 N GARDEN ST	1212 N GARDEN ST	1219 N GARDEN ST

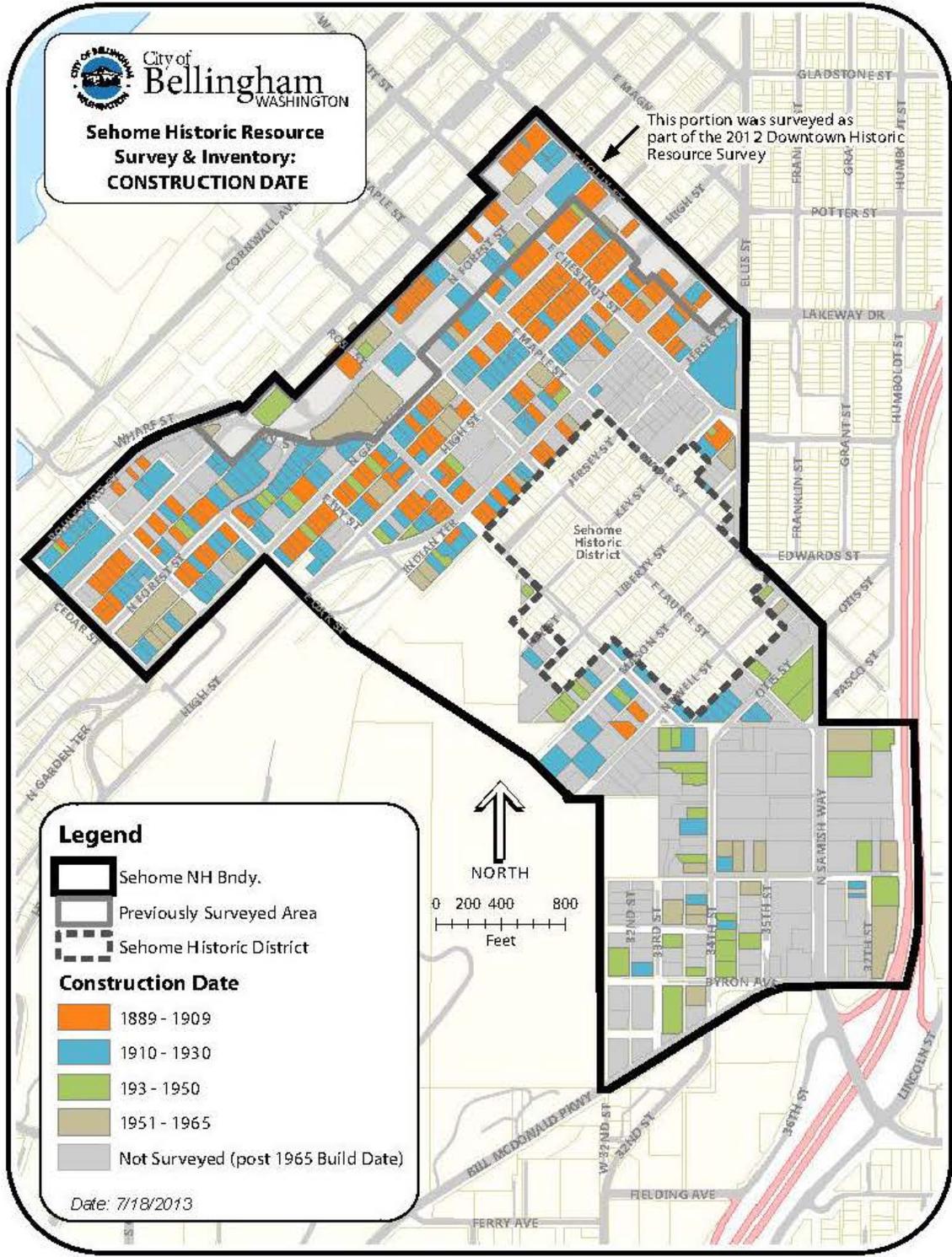
The **9 non-contributing** addresses in the North Garden Street Historic District within the proposed boundaries at this preliminary stage would be:

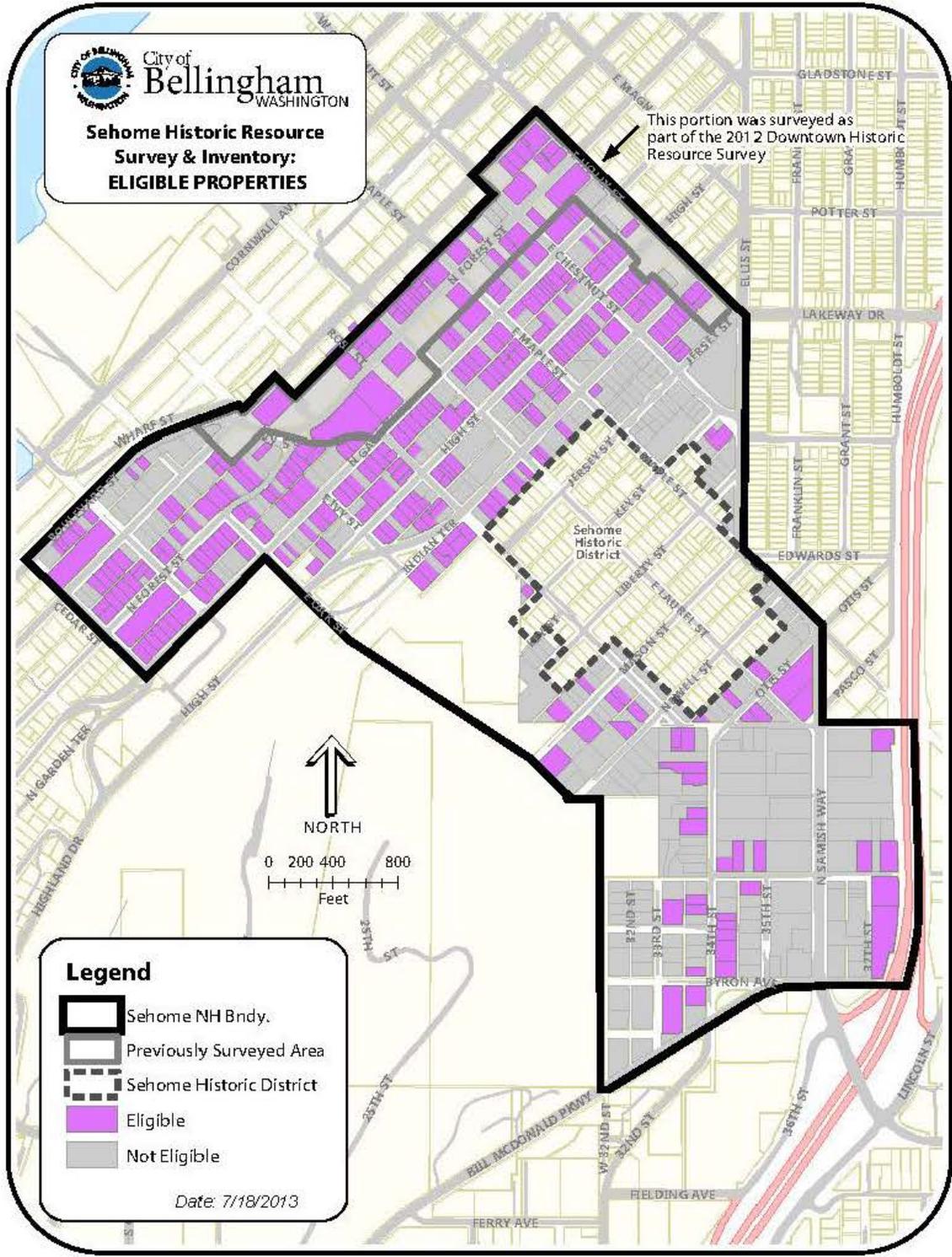
710-712 N GARDEN ST	808-810 N GARDEN ST	1115 N GARDEN ST
718 N GARDEN ST	814 N GARDEN ST	1123 N GARDEN ST
801 N GARDEN ST	1015 N GARDEN ST	1218 N GARDEN ST

# APPENDIX 1: MAPS









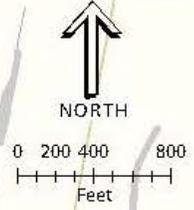

**City of Bellingham**  
 WASHINGTON  
**Sehome Historic Resource Survey & Inventory:**  
**ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES**

This portion was surveyed as part of the 2012 Downtown Historic Resource Survey

**Legend**

-  Sehome NH Bndy.
-  Previously Surveyed Area
-  Sehome Historic District
-  Eligible
-  Not Eligible

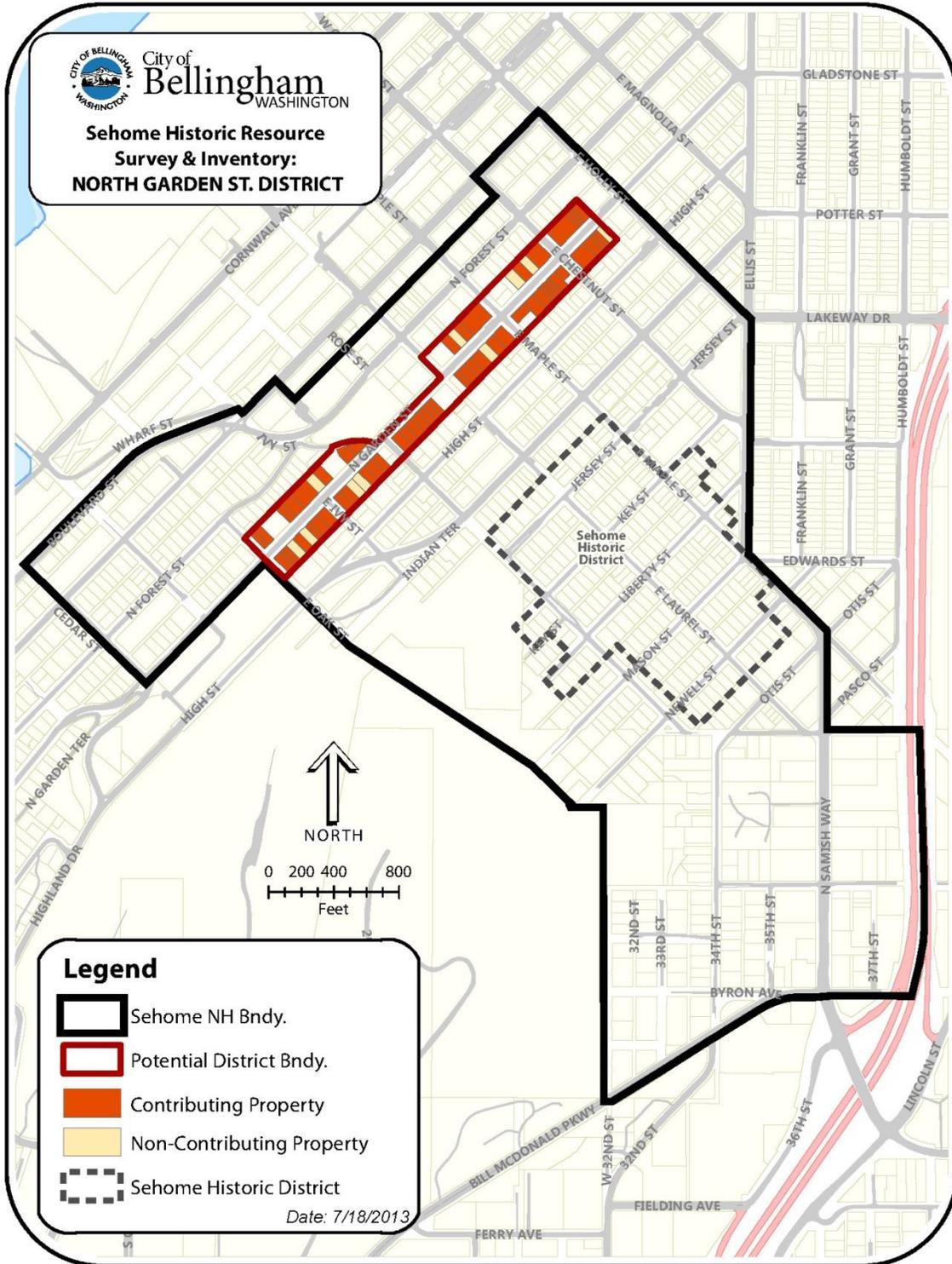
Date: 7/18/2013





City of  
**Bellingham**  
WASHINGTON

**Sehome Historic Resource  
Survey & Inventory:  
NORTH GARDEN ST. DISTRICT**



**Legend**

-  Sehome NH Bndy.
-  Potential District Bndy.
-  Contributing Property
-  Non-Contributing Property
-  Sehome Historic District

Date: 7/18/2013