



LTAP news

What Does Bridge Inspection Frequency and Compliance Mean to You?

By Debbie Lehmann P.E. FHWA Washington Division Office and WSDOT H&LP Staff

In 2011, the FHWA implemented a new oversight process of the National Bridge Inspection Program. This program included the implementation of 23 Metrics to ensure consistency in the oversight process in accordance with federal regulations. The Metrics include a wide variety of oversight including inventory upkeep, qualifications of inspectors, inspection frequencies and procedures, bridge files, type of inspection procedures, scour documentation, and quality control and quality assurance procedures.

Based on FHWA’s review of the inspection frequency requirements contained in the metrics over the last couple of years, it appears that there has been some confusion in the interpretation of the requirements. Specifically,

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Bellingham's Innovative Urban Village Transportation Impact Fee Reduction Program Wins Award for Transportation Planning

By Chris Comeau, AICP, Transportation Planner, Bellingham Public Works

Since 1994, the City of Bellingham, WA has assessed development for transportation impact fees (TIF) to recover a proportional share of the City's investment in transportation infrastructure to accommodate growth. Despite regular complaints from developers, business owners, and community activists suggesting that TIFs are barriers to infill development, Bellingham's TIF rate is low compared to TIF rates charged in other Washington cities. This is confirmed by a study of TIF rates in 60 cities and 5 counties in Washington, revealing that Bellingham's TIF rates were in the lowest 30% and far below the average TIF in Washington State.

www.cob.org/documents/pw/transportation/2013-wa-tif-graph-and-chart.pdf

In 2010, in an effort to further promote comprehensive plan goals for mixed use urban infill and to create even more financial incentive, and reward, for new development in designated Urban Villages, Public Works transportation planners created Bellingham's Urban Village TIF Reduction Program. Importantly, the program is based on legally defensible practices using ITE trip generation methodology, research, and widely-accepted practices within the field of transportation planning and engineering.

www.cob.org/documents/pw/transportation/uv-tif-faq-2012.pdf

Citywide, Bellingham awards 100% TIF credit for previous uses, but in addition, Urban Village development is rewarded with an automatic 15% trip reduction for mixed use location and an automatic 7 to 10% trip reduction depending on proximity to high-frequency (15 min) public transit. Vehicle trips, and thus TIF, can be further reduced, up to 50% total, through purchase of bus passes, car share memberships, or other transportation demand management strategies. In 2013, the

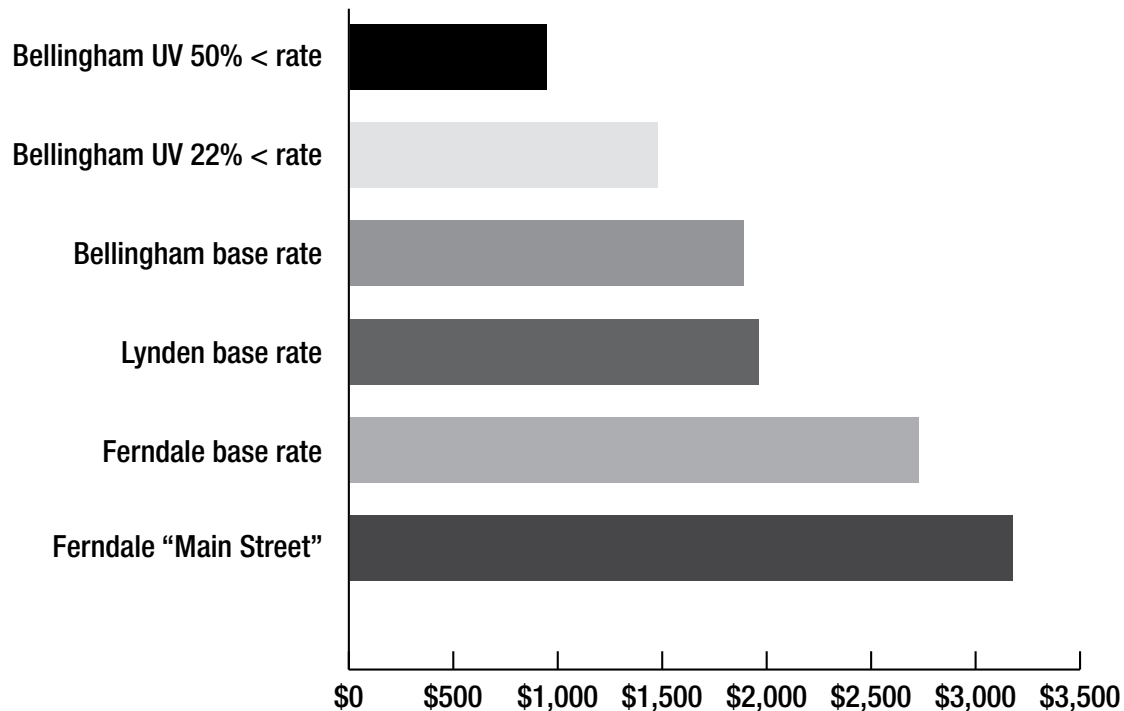
TIF rate for downtown Bellingham and other “Urban Villages” is 22-50% lower than other parts of Bellingham, 25% lower than Lynden’s TIF rates, and 50% lower than Ferndale’s “Main Street” TIF rate, which means that TIFs in Bellingham’s Urban Villages are lower than any other significant population center in Whatcom County.

City	Population	2013 TIF Base Rate	2013 TIF Per Square Foot of Development	2013 TIF Central Business District ^{1,2}	2013 TIF Central Business District 50% ³
Bellingham	77,000	\$1,925	\$1,925	\$1,502	\$963
Lynden	12,125	\$1,997	\$1,997	\$1,997	n/a
Ferndale	11,681	\$2,783	\$2,783	\$2,070 ⁴	n/a

Notes:

1. Bellingham CBD and “Urban Villages” = 22% to 25% automatic reduction
2. Ferndale charges \$3,243 TIF for 443-acre area including “Main Street” (CBD)
3. Bellingham CBD and “Urban Villages” can reduce TIF up to 50% via TDM
4. Ferndale allows 10% trip generation reduction in CBD for additional pass-by trips

2013 TIF Base Rates in Whatcom County's Largest Population Centers

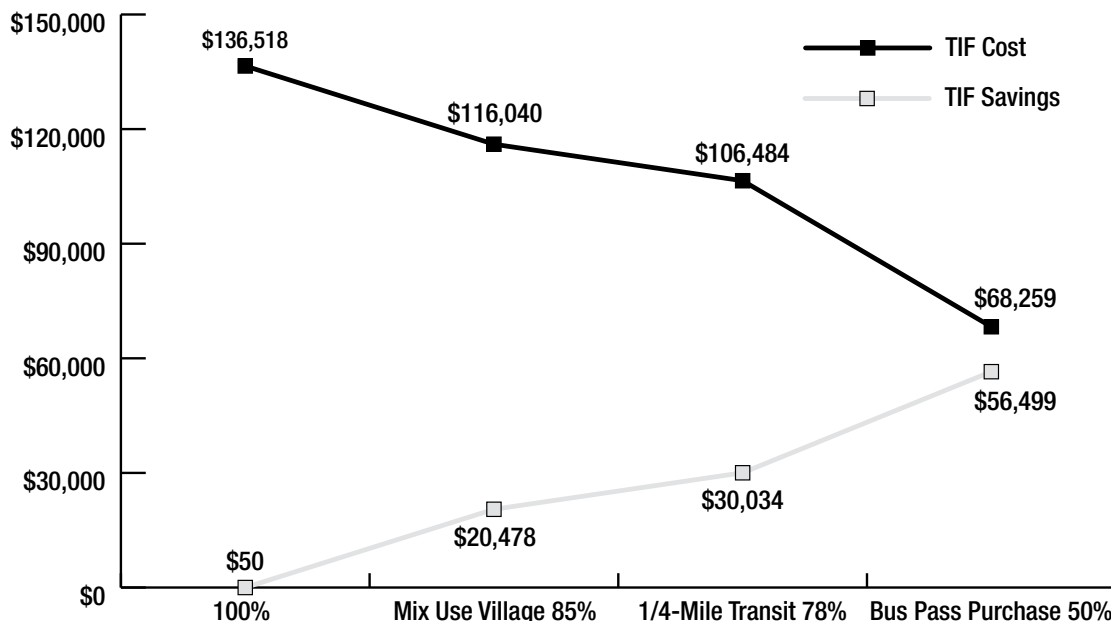


Since its implementation in 2011, Bellingham’s Urban Village TIF Reduction Program has saved developers and business owners tens of thousands of dollars in TIF assessments, simply by helping to fulfill the community’s adopted vision and policy emphasis on mixed use infill development and multimodal transportation.

www.cob.org/documents/pw/transportation/impact-fee-comparison-pie-charts.pdf

Bellingham's Urban Village TIF Reduction (Up To 50%) Resulting From Various Performance Measures

Case Study of 183 Multifamily Apartments in Downtown Bellingham



On October 12, 2012, at Washington State's American Planning Association conference in Olympia, WA, Bellingham transportation planners received the 2012 APA-PAW Award for Transportation Planning in Washington State for Bellingham's Urban Village TIF Reduction Program. While this award from the State planning organization is unlikely to change the opinions of those who have their own theories about TIF, it is clear validation from the planning profession that Bellingham has integrated goals for mixed use infill development, multimodal transportation, and economic development to create some of the most progressive TIFs in Washington.

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