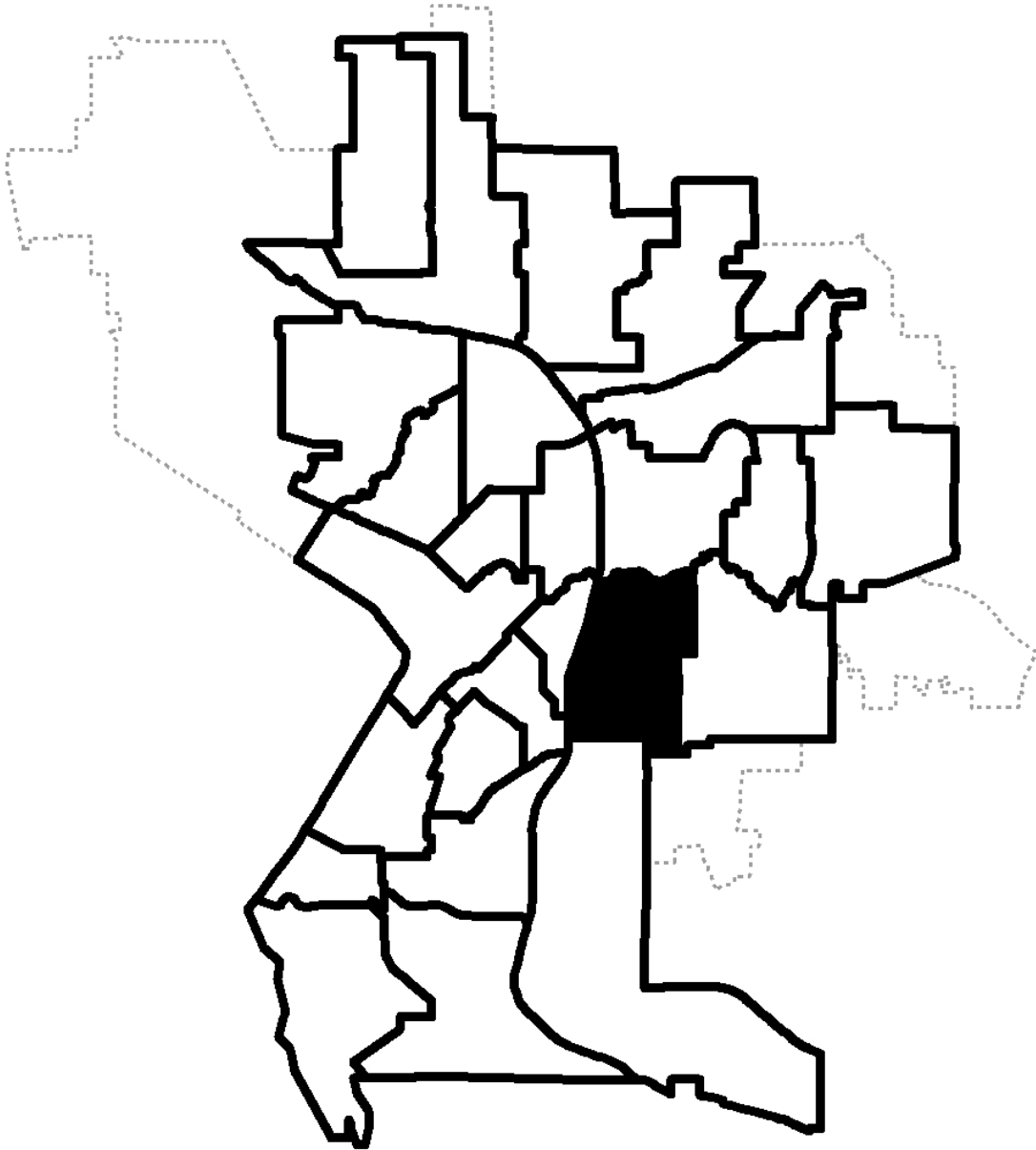




City of Bellingham Neighborhood Plan **PUGET**



PUGET NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

I. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Puget Neighborhood is a large single-family neighborhood with pockets of multifamily residences, a large mobile home park, a commercial node at Lakeway Center, the Civic Field public recreational complex which serves the entire city, and considerable industrial development along Whatcom Creek at the north end of the neighborhood.

While Lakeway Center, a designated city "Town Center" is almost completely developed, there is room for additional commercial or industrial development in other parts of the neighborhood southward toward the I-5/Samish interchange and in Areas 14, 18, 19, and 20.

Puget and Toledo Hills occupy the southern and eastern parts of the neighborhood and are developed with single-family homes on medium-sized lots. Homes are well cared for and many have excellent Bellingham Bay or Canadian Cascade views. In the past 40 years, streets, utilities, and residential development have extended south and north of Lakeway. In some cases, this has resulted in full standard new street sections feeding additional traffic onto Lakeway Drive via older, substandard street sections.

North of Lakeway Drive, the neighborhood drops down to a large wetland/flood plain area associated with Whatcom Creek. This area contains the Haskell Business Park, Grizzly Imports, developing residential neighborhoods, and wetlands.

Civic Field, the most active park and recreation complex in the city is located between the northeast corner of Lincoln and Lakeway and the Whatcom Creek floodplain. This complex includes the Bellingham Aquatics Center, Civic football stadium, Joe Martin baseball field, a passive wetland park, an ice skating facility, large parking area, Frank Geri softball fields, walking trails, and undeveloped forest land.

II. OPEN SPACE

PART ONE – PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

Existing Facilities

The 84-acre Civic Athletic Complex is a "community park" that attracts users from all parts of the city and county. The accompanying increase in traffic, noise, light, litter and crowds can have a negative effect on the Puget neighbors

The following facilities are located in the Civic Athletic Complex:

- **Civic Stadium:** The stadium has 2800 seats in the south grand stand, 680 seats in the north grand stand and 200 bench seats in the north grand stand. The parking lot has 575 stalls and 12 handicapped stalls. The stadium is used by all three Bellingham High School football, soccer and track and field teams for practices and games. Western Washington University uses the stadium for track and field and cross country practices and meets. The adult football teams

“Bulldogs” and “Blitz” use the stadium for practices and games. There are a number of youth and adult soccer leagues which also use the facility. All three Bellingham High Schools have used the facility for commencement services.

- **Civic Stadium Track:** The track at Civic Stadium is utilized for a variety of uses by Sehome, Bellingham, and Squalicum High Schools and Western Washington University. The track is also used by the general public, for Parks Department track meets, police training and various other Park program uses.
- **Joe Martin Baseball Field:** This baseball field has 60 individual seats and bench seating for 3,000. Bellingham, Sehome and Squalicum High Schools, and Western Washington University use the facility for baseball practices and games. In addition there are a number of American Legion youth and adult baseball leagues who use the field. This is also the home stadium of the Bellingham Bells.
- **Frank Geri Softball Fields:** These four fields and two parking lots are used primarily for adult softball and youth baseball practice and games. The three Bellingham high schools use the fields for fastpitch softball practice and games. They are occasionally used for soccer practices by youth and adult teams.
- **Downer Youth Ball Fields:** These two baseball fields are used by youth baseball teams including the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA leagues. Bellingham School District middle schools also use the facility.
- **Arne Hanna Aquatic Center:** The Aquatic Center has four swimming pools, which include a beach-entry instructional pool with a 135 foot water slide, a 25 yard, eight-lane lap pool, a dive tank with a one-meter springboard and a hydro therapy pool. The Arne Hanna Aquatic Center offers a variety of programs, including lap swims, American Red Cross swim lessons and training courses, 3 different intensity levels of shallow water aerobics, deep water running, deep water aerobics, water child care, kayaking and preschool, family and open swims. All three Bellingham High Schools’ swim teams use the center for practices and meets.
- **Sportsplex Ice Arena and Indoor Soccer Fields:** This building houses an indoor ice arena and soccer fields. Portable bleachers can be brought in for sporting events. The facility hosts ice hockey practices, games and tournaments; Indoor adult and youth soccer clinics, games and tournaments; Adult and youth ice skating lessons and performances. The “Roller Betties” hold their roller derby events here. The facility is also used for community garage sales and business association expositions.
- **Dirt Bike Park:** This park is used by the public for dirt bike practice and recreational use.
- **Skate Park:** This park is used by the public for recreational skate boarding. It is also used annually for the “Russ Schofield Classic.”
- **Neighborhood Playground:** Located adjacent to Carl Cozier Elementary School whose students use the playground and adjacent park area for school activities.

Existing and Proposed Trails

Public Trails

The Puget Neighborhood has several existing trails and proposed trails. They vary in function, from transportation for pedestrian and bikes, nature experience, exercise, and walking dogs on woodland trails, to providing connectivity within the neighborhood on public rights-of-way trails and short connector trails.

- **Whatcom Creek Trail:** Within the neighborhood, this bike and pedestrian trail begins at Fraser Street just east of Puget Street: It travels north, crosses Whatcom Creek and then follows the creek east to Valencia Street and west to Meador Avenue.
- **Civic Athletic Complex Trails:** These bike and foot trails are located throughout Civic Field complex. They enter west of Geri Fields off Fraser Street. They travel behind the fields on the south side and continue across Puget Street down the hill to St. Paul Street and then north to Fraser Street and south to St. Paul Street. Another portion enters Civic Field just east of Moore Street and travels behind the ice arena north toward Geri Field. The trail then turns east then southeast across Puget Street.
- **The Cemetery Creek Trail:** This trail is in the Magnolia Hills/Wildflower development and travels through the Cemetery Creek greenbelt.
- **Pacificview Pond Trail:** This neighborhood trail circumvents a small pond in the Pacificview Development.
- **Samish Crest Trails:** These trails, when constructed will begin in the Puget Neighborhood and head south toward Lake Padden and east to Yew Street. These trails, although not in the boundaries of the Puget Neighborhood, abut the southern border of the neighborhood and are pivotal in eventually connecting the Whatcom Creek Trails to the Lake Padden Trails.

In addition:

Footpaths: There are a number of unofficial trails on undeveloped streets and public utility rights-of-way (ROW). They are informal footpaths without identifying signage that provide connectivity within the neighborhood. Depending upon frequency of use, weather, and topography the conditions of these trails vary from well-worn and easily passable to rocky, muddy, steep and difficult to traverse.

- Consolidation Avenue ROW between Nevada Street and 46th
- Edwards Street ROW between Kelly Ridge Court and Brenda Highlands/Samish Crest Trails
- Edwards Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
- Whatcom Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
- Whatcom Street ROW between West Racine Street and Queen Street

Existing Open Space

The Puget Neighborhood has a variety of dwelling types on large lots with private landscaping primarily south of Lakeway Drive, east of Nevada Street, and west of Puget Street. These green spaces are privately owned with no public access, however the resulting beauty helps define the character of the neighborhood. Preservation of this quality is warranted. North of Lakeway Drive and west of Woburn Street, the houses are clustered on small lots that help define and protect a green belt around Cemetery Creek.

Whatcom Creek, which flows from Lake Whatcom to Bellingham Bay, is a resource of citywide interest. It bisects Bellingham geographically and connects Lake Whatcom, Bloedel Donovan Park, Scudder's Pond, Whatcom Falls Park, the Civic Center, Maritime Heritage Park, Bellingham Bay, and the "Waterfront District" redevelopment area. The part of Whatcom Creek in the neighborhood has a regulated 100-foot buffer area. Lincoln Creek and both forks of Cemetery Creek have a 75-foot minimum regulated buffer area.

Existing Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Green space is also a result of wetlands and/or environmentally sensitive areas that have been or will be restored to native habitat.

- Whatcom Creek
- Red Tail Reach Salmon and Wildlife Restoration Project
- Cemetery Creek
- The Hawley Property: This is an open space west of Puget Street and east of Nevada Street in between Edwards Street and the base of Puget Hill.

PART TWO – ANALYSIS & OBJECTIVES

The Puget Neighborhood is a pivotal link between two major greenbelt areas which wildlife inhabit:

- Whatcom Creek Greenway; and
- Samish Crest Greenway (which will ultimately extend to Lake Padden).

Because many of the larger landscaped lots are on the hill and are part of the water flow into Whatcom Falls Creek, the neighborhood must be responsible about runoff. Prudent and limited use of fertilizer, pesticide and insecticide is vital.

In undeveloped, un-platted residential areas, dedication of open space and park impact fees are a required part of plat approval. Many of the open space patterns follow steep hillsides and stream corridors. These critical areas are inherently unsuited for development. Stream corridors are also a recreation resource and have value as wildlife areas. Steep hillsides provide the scenic backdrops that are an important element of Bellingham's character. The nature of development on hillsides should be such that the scenic character is not significantly altered.

Because of the central location of Civic Athletic Complex in the Puget Neighborhood, highly developed parks are not needed. Instead, naturally landscaped, low maintenance open space areas and smaller neighborhood parks are proposed with playgrounds for toddlers and small picnic facilities. In the Puget Neighborhood Survey conducted in 2009, 70% of respondents want neighborhood parks/playgrounds for small children within walking distance of their homes. 100% of respondents with preschool and elementary age children think it is important to be able to walk to a playground or small park.

PART THREE – PUGET PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE GOALS (PPG) AND PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

PPG 1: A public park should be within walking distance (1/2 mile radius) of every Puget Neighborhood resident.

Develop a park with a playground and small picnic area on the upper hill south of Lakeway Drive on the City park property near Racine Street and San Juan Boulevard.

PPG 2: Puget neighborhood trails should provide accessibility & connectivity options within the neighborhood.

Construct trails as indicated in the City's Comprehensive Plan, including:

- A. Complete/extend Samish Crest Trail, including connections to Wade King Elementary School and 40th Street.
- B. Complete Whatcom Creek Trail to Downtown.
- C. Install better signage on existing trails and rights-of-way.
- D. Provide adequate funding for trail maintenance.
- E. Evaluate the possibility of adding the following trial connections:
 - Construct a trail/stairs in the Consolidation Avenue right-of-way from Puget Street to Nevada Street.
 - Construct a trail through the Hawley Property form Puget Street to Nevada Street.
 - Construct connection trails in the Whatcom Street right-of-way from E. Racine Street to Toledo Street and W. Racine Street to Queen Street.
- F. Encourage developers to provide neighborhood trail connectors to improve non-motorized transportation links as development occurs.

PPG 3: The Puget Neighborhood should continue to use practices which protect and preserve the environment.

- A. Encourage widespread use of the Backyard Habitat Program, which includes native vegetation and plantings to absorb runoff in the Whatcom Creek watershed areas.
- B. When building trails, use native plants and other low impact development techniques designed for the appropriate level of use to provide natural habitat for birds and wildlife.

- C. A dense buffer of native vegetation along I-5 should be installed simultaneously by the abutting property owners when developed or redeveloped. The purpose of the buffer is to mitigate freeway noise, absorb runoff, protect water quality in Lincoln Creek, and lessen the visual impact of the freeway.

III. PUBLIC FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

PART ONE – EXISTING FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Drainage

The Puget Neighborhood has had many improvements to the drainage, stormwater retention and flood control facilities since the last Puget Neighborhood Plan revision.

The City of Bellingham Public Works Department has completed work on an update to the 1995 Watershed Master Plan, which has been renamed the Stormwater Comprehensive Plan (SCP).

The City's 1995 plan continues to be a useful part of the new SCP. The work done under the new plan focused on a new integrated stormwater modeling system. This system was needed to meet the new regulatory requirements that the City passed in 2006, along with our Municipal Phase II NPDES permit, that came into effect February 2007. Specifically, this system works with the City's geographic information system (GIS) by melding information on land use, impervious surfaces, vegetation, soils, rainfall and our stormwater systems (including our creeks) to provide runoff information. This system paints a much more accurate picture of our current stormwater system and issues such as erosion, flooding and needed system improvements. This system also provides the city and development engineers better information to integrate into site planning. The SCP is a dynamic tool that is intended to evolve as more data becomes available, providing new and better information for years to come.

Water

The water system serving the Puget Neighborhood is comprised of four different pressure zones due to the topography of the area.

Sanitary Sewer

Except for a few properties, the entire neighborhood is serviced with sanitary sewer. A requirement will soon be placed in the city code requiring all houses to be on city sewer.

PART TWO – UTILITIES GOALS

Drainage Goals (PDG):

PDG 1: All water channels should be kept open and supporting water flow at all times.

PDG 2: All new developments should be constructed consistent with the recommendations of the Watershed Master Plan, the Stormwater Comprehensive Plan, and stormwater development standards.

Water Goal (PWG):

PWG 1: Those facilities which are undersized for fire flow should be replaced. Water pipes which are asbestos coated should be replaced.

Sanitary Sewer Goal (PSG):

PSG 1: All of sanitary sewer system should be sized to adequately serve the neighborhood especially where new development is occurring.

PART 3 – UTILITIES PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**Drainage**

- A. Any new major development should submit a drainage plan in conformance with the City's storm water management code for approval by the Public Works Department. That plan should be implemented prior to, or concurrent with, development with the full cost of the plan being at the developer's expense.
- B. Storm sewers with run-off control should be installed at future development sites.
- C. Creeks should be maintained for further protection of aquatic resources. Some modification of certain streams is recommended (see Watershed Master Plan and Stormwater Comprehensive Plan) to increase the flood plain capacity or storage basin capacity.

Drainage Problem Areas as identified by the residents of the neighborhood. These are areas of Puget Neighborhood that require remedial action due to excessive rainwater accumulation.

- Nevada Street in the older section between Lakeway Drive and Edwards Street
- E. Lopez Court at E. Toledo Street
- Ponderosa Street at Toledo Street
- Wildflower Way at Wildflower Court
- Moore Street at York Street
- Fraser Street at Lincoln Street
- Pacific Street at Lakeway Drive
- Pacific Street – north of Lakeway Drive at the dead-end
- Toledo Street at the northern end/bottom of hill – the stream overflows onto the street at the pathway going into the park area
- E. Racine Street in the 1200 block – water runs down the street missing the drains and going into the downside driveways
- Edwards Street at Puget Street – water coming down Edwards Street does not go into a storm drain

Water

- A. Some facilities south of Lakeway Drive and east of Lincoln Street require replacement due to undersized water mains for fire flow requirements.

- B. Consolidation Avenue has sections of piping that do not meet the fire flow requirements of the current zoning density. These will need to be upgraded when development occurs.
- C. Areas east of Racine Street also require some system upgrades to improve the “Padden-Yew pressure zone” serving these plats.
- D. South of Lopez Street requires upgrading of fire flow availability.

Sanitary Sewer

- A. Sections of the Lincoln Street trunk sewer line require replacement or upsizing as development occurs in the southwest corner of the Puget Neighborhood.
- B. Development of both existing lots and new plats will require extensions of transmissions mains.

IV. SCHOOLS

Carl Cozier Elementary School is located on the northeast side of the intersection of Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street. The school was built in 1951 with additions in 1958 and 1971. It includes 45,390 square feet with two portables on a 4.2-acre site. According to State standards, 10 acres is desirable for an elementary school site. Current student capacity is 400. 1995 enrollment figures show that Carl Cozier Elementary is operating over capacity. The 1993 Capital Facilities Plan for the school district identified the need for additional classrooms, small group instruction areas, and an enlarged library/resource center.

Lakeway Drive is classified as a primary arterial, with approximately 22,500 cars per day average daily traffic at Carl Cozier. Lincoln Street is a secondary arterial with close to 5,800 cars per day average daily traffic. This traffic will continue to increase in the near future. Most school children must cross Lakeway Drive or Lincoln Street, and many are bused from relatively close areas. The school building is as large as can be accommodated on the site while population in the Puget and Whatcom Falls Neighborhoods is expected to increase.

It is recommended that the school district seriously consider relocating Carl Cozier Elementary School, and that the school district and the city consider city acquisition of the school as a recreation center and parks and recreation department headquarters.

V. TRANSPORTATION

PART ONE – STREETS, PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLING FACILITIES

Neighborhood transportation options include walking, bicycling and driving, with WTA public transit routes on Lakeway Drive, Woburn Street, and Lincoln Street (in 2010), plus immediate access to the Seattle airport shuttle, and the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride (currently with access to Skagit County via the Inter-county Connector).

Arterials

- Primary Arterials; Lakeway Drive, Woburn Street

- Secondary Arterials: Lincoln Street
- Collector Arterial: Puget Street, Fraser Street, San Juan Boulevard (Yew Street to Puget Street)
- Planned Future Secondary Arterial (pending adequate funding): San Juan Boulevard (Elwood Street to Pacificview)

Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks – include all of the following:

- Non-existent
- Extruded curb over asphalt
- Rolled curb with adjacent sidewalk
- Square curb with adjacent sidewalk
- Setback sidewalks with intervening planting strip

Footpaths on undeveloped streets/public rights-of-way (ROW). - Common use has created informal pathways in public right-of-way (i.e., rocky, narrow footpaths with muddy and slippery surfaces during rainy season), that are without identifying signage.

- Consolidation Avenue ROW between Nevada Street and 46th
- Edwards Street ROW between Kelly Ridge Court and Brenda Highlands/Samish Crest Trails
- Edwards Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
- Whatcom Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
- Whatcom Street ROW between West Racine Street and Queen Street

Bicycle Lanes

- South side of Lakeway Drive from Queen Street to Verona Street
- East side of Lincoln Street between Consolidation Avenue and Lakeway Center/Mobile Home Park
- Fraser Street (both sides) between Lincoln Street and Valencia Street
- Puget Street (both sides) between south entrance of Civic Field parking lot and Fraser Street

In addition:

Public trails provide access within the Puget Neighborhood. They – and the above mentioned footpaths – substitute for sidewalks in some developments, or provide “cut-through” connectivity between long city blocks, in addition to providing routes to destinations such as Civic Athletic Complex or the Lakeway Commercial Area.

All City maintained trails in Puget Neighborhood are listed here for context. Some of them serve as transportation routes – as well as recreation – leading to destinations and providing connectivity to other transportation routes.

- Whatcom Creek Trail between Meador Avenue and Woburn Street

- Racine Trail between Whatcom Creek and Fraser Street
- Civic Field Trails* along creeks and in open space throughout the Civic Field complex
- Cemetery Creek Trails along creeks and in open space adjacent to subdivisions
- Pacificview Trails in open space
- Other minor connections

*Note: Refer to the Open Space section for a listing of Civic Field activities that result in neighborhood traffic impacts.

PART TWO – TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS & OBJECTIVES

One reason many of the Puget neighbors have chosen to live in the neighborhood is because of proximity to downtown, Western Washington University, as well as I-5 for its connections to outlying areas. In fact, more than any public or private facility, the Puget neighborhood is unified by the presence of Lakeway Drive. Besides being the focus for the regional and neighborhood commercial district, the Lakeway/Lincoln area is a crossroads intersection with many users of wide variety of transportation modes moving in multiple directions.

Topography, history, and development style have limited the through street grid in the Puget neighborhood. The preponderance of cul-de-sacs, dead-end streets, and the lack of parallel arterial streets have exacerbated the traffic issues due to reliance on Lakeway Drive as the primary corridor for access and mobility throughout the neighborhood. The transition of Lakeway Drive from a narrow, curving county road adjacent to residential development east of the city limits, into a major arterial adds to the challenge of added improvements to achieve safety and efficiency for all transportation modes. Acquisition of additional right-of-way needed in order to add consistent bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities along Lakeway Drive could be costly, and would change the character of the neighborhood. The traffic problems affecting travel through, and livability within the Puget Neighborhood provide a challenge.

In order to determine policy suggestions for mitigating the challenges of the Lakeway corridor, connecting arterials, and residential streets, the Puget Neighborhood Plan identifies the following specific travel barriers to the neighborhood center and other destinations by users of all modes.

CHALLENGES TO SAFE, EFFICIENT TRAVEL (Categorized by Destination)

DESTINATION: LAKEWAY/LINCOLN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (REGIONAL)

Including travel to Carl Cozier Elementary School and Civic Field Complex

- **Pedestrian Challenges for Access to the Commercial District** (within ¼ mile)
 1. Access from immediately adjacent neighborhoods (Sehome, York) is constricted by the presence of the I-5 freeway.
 2. I-5 underpass sidewalks on Lakeway Drive are 3' wide. Thus, vehicle traffic feels too close for comfort, especially with the concrete wall adjacent to the

sidewalk. Sidewalks are often shared between pedestrians and cyclists, thereby adding more volume to a narrow sidewalk corridor.

3. Parking lot size and building setback positions create distance between destinations and appear inhospitable to users outside of a vehicle.
 4. The Bellingham School Board has determined that students residing south of Lakeway Drive will be bused to Carl Cozier Elementary School in order to avoid crossing Lakeway Drive on foot or bike.
 5. The natural pedestrian flow across Lincoln Street (south of Lakeway Drive) is mid-block between the Lakeway Drive intersection and the enhanced crosswalk. Vehicle flow in multiple directions into/out of opposing commercial driveways, combined with pedestrians shopping at both locations and crossing to transit stops increases the unpredictability and hazard for all users.
 6. Much of the commercial development is in large parcels/long blocks, creating long walking distances.
 7. Pedestrians crossing commercial driveways must watch multiple directions simultaneously to ensure their right-of-way will not be compromised by a vehicle.
 8. Several intersections where drivers can turn right on red feel unsafe to pedestrians due to:
 - Motorists waiting on crosswalk markings, as well as
 - Uncertainty if pedestrians have been seen/acknowledged.
 9. Nevada Street is a residential through-street within ¼ mile of Lakeway Drive and the Commercial District. Nevada Street residents experience traffic volumes such that residents would feel safer walking in separated space. (Currently no curbs, gutters or sidewalks exist on either side of Nevada Street, between Edwards Street and Consolidation Avenue. The City has included sidewalks for this area in the Six-Year TIP, but adequate funding has yet to be identified.)
- **Motorized Challenges for Access to the Commercial District**

Two (2) major intersections with stoplights in close proximity to each other, plus the 3rd stoplight west of I-5 freeway create long waits at lights during morning and evening rush hours, as well as other high demand periods.

1. Traffic flow in multiple directions with commercial driveways in close proximity to stoplight intersections – challenges the motorist to pay attention simultaneously to multiple traffic directions, high volume traffic & speeds
2. Commercial Driveway Left Turns: It is difficult for drivers turning left from commercial driveways onto Lakeway Drive due to number of lanes to cross, prevailing speed of cross-traffic and/or morning/evening volume.
3. Driveway alignment along Lincoln Street between the Fred Meyer and Lakeway Center parking lots makes left turns and travel from one to the other difficult for motorists – especially when a motorist from the opposite driveway

- is also turning left.
4. Nevada Street Left Turns: It is difficult for drivers turning left from Nevada Street. Issues include:
 - a. Waiting for breaks in traffic in order to turn onto Lakeway Drive
 - b. Number of lanes to cross, and
 - c. Prevailing speed.
 5. Auto-oriented commercial development makes it more likely that neighbors will drive from one establishment to the other, even if across the street (e.g., Fred Meyer Shopping Center to Lakeway Center), which can create increased congestion in parking lots and on the arterials.
- **Bicycle Challenges for Access to the Commercial District**
 1. Lakeway Drive in particular – and Lincoln Street with the Commercial District – provide a significant barrier for many cyclists. Issues include:
 - a. Lack of bike lanes or designated shared travel space along Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street.
 - b. The discrepancy between motor vehicle and bicycle speeds makes sharing the lane difficult and/or uncomfortable for cyclists.
 - c. Morning and evening commute traffic volumes.
 - d. Number of vehicle lanes.
 - e. “Jockeying” for position by motorists during lower volume hours creates a feeling of lack of safety when motorists stay in the same travel lane as cyclists.
 - f. Motorists making a right turn at intersections who don’t notice bicyclists.
 2. Access from immediately adjacent neighborhoods (Sehome, York) to the Commercial District is constricted by the presence of the I-5 freeway. Access by bike from Puget Neighborhood and other neighborhoods east of the freeway to areas west of the freeway including Western Washington University (WWU) and Downtown is limited to Lakeway Drive, Samish Way, or Meador Avenue.

DESTINATION: THROUGH ACCESS

Including Downtown, WWU, and other locations north & south along the I-5 corridor.

- **For all transportation Types** – *See above comments in the Commercial District section.*

DESTINATION: ACCESS TO HIGH FREQUENCY TRANSIT “PLUM GO-LINE”

Lakeway from Downtown to Woburn

- **Pedestrian Challenges for Access to the Transit high Frequency Line**
 1. Neighbors who want to board or disembark from the bus do not feel safe crossing the street (.6 mile distance on Lakeway between stoplights at Yew and Puget) – because of 4 lanes to cross, difficulty judging speed (posted at

- 35 mph), and limited sightlines.
2. Because Whatcom Street is parallel to Lakeway Drive, it provides an alternative to Lakeway Drive for pedestrians traveling through the neighborhood. It can be used to connect with Puget Street where a stoplight provides an opportunity to cross Lakeway Drive and access transit stops. Whatcom Street has 2 segments that are undeveloped. However, each segment has an informal footpath without identifying signs. Common use has created these rough pathways in the public right-of-way. (i.e., rocky narrow footpaths with muddy and slippery surfaces during rainy season).

DESTINATION: LINCOLN CREEK PARK & RIDE

The Lincoln Creek Park & Ride facility is owned, operated, and being improved in several phases by Western Washington University (WWU). The 6-acre site was formerly used as a drive-in movie theater, but is in the process of being transformed into a multimodal park & ride and transit facility with high-frequency service to the university. There are some existing challenges to the pedestrian and bicycle environment that will have to be addressed as the project is completed, including:

- **Bicyclist Challenges for Access to the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride**
 1. Lincoln Street southbound drive lane does not have a shoulder and the discrepancy between motor vehicle and bicycle speeds makes sharing the narrow land difficult for cyclists as they begin the incline towards Samish Way.
 2. Lack of connecting facilities along busy Lakeway Drive limits user access.
- **Pedestrian Challenges for Access to the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride**
 1. Gravel pathway along Lincoln Street between Ashley Avenue/Maple Street & Byron Avenue.
 2. Transit stop on Lincoln Street at Byron Avenue does not have a curb cut or other connecting pedestrian facilities.
 3. Pedestrian crossings are challenging in the unmarked intersections at both Byron Avenue and Maple Street (each with a transit stop on the west side of Lincoln Street). Posted vehicle speed limit is 35 mph.

Project plans require WWU to construct sidewalks and bicycle lanes along the entire property frontage on Lincoln Street and to install a new traffic signal at Lincoln Street/Consolidation Avenue with marked crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signals. WTA transit busses will be routed into the Lincoln Creek Site via a new driveway entrance and will then exit via the new signalized intersection at the main public entrance to the park & ride site. The new traffic signal will help to keep WTA busses on schedule, will provide safer crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists, and will slow vehicle traffic along Lincoln Street. The City of Bellingham has committed to working with WWU to improve the pedestrian connection between the existing car wash site and the new traffic signal at Consolidation Avenue. WWU will also be required to improve the western edge of Lincoln Street, opposite the park & ride facility, with a minimum 4-foot-wide shoulder. Ultimately, future development on the west side of Lincoln Street will be responsible for

constructing a full bicycle lane, curb, gutter, and sidewalk.

DESTINATION: ARTERIALS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

- **Pedestrian Challenges While Traveling Along Arterials**

Puget Street (between Edwards Street and Consolidation Avenue): Lack of sidewalk and/or separated walking space from vehicles is even more hazardous in winter weather due to steep topography (i.e., sliding cars).

- **Motorist & Bicyclist Challenges While Traveling Along Arterials**

Left Turns onto Lakeway Drive: It is difficult for drivers turning left from residential streets onto Lakeway Drive due to number of lanes to cross, speed of cross-traffic and sightlines (i.e., Racine Street, Toledo Street, Undine Street, and St. Paul Street have all been identified by Puget neighbors).

Left Turns on/off Lakeway Drive: Crossing, or making a left turn onto or off of Lakeway Drive, is difficult for motorists and bicyclists all along the corridor. Issues include waiting for breaks in traffic in order to turn, and crossing four lanes. High travel speeds and short sightlines increase the difficulty for motorists who stop on Lakeway to await a break in traffic in order to turn left off Lakeway.

DESTINATION: RESIDENTIAL CONNECTIVITY

- **Pedestrian Challenges for Residential Connectivity**

1. Distance: Much of residential development is in large parcels / long blocks limiting through access an increasing travel distances. In addition, the steep topography is a challenge for those who want to walk or bike.
2. Condition: Informal pedestrian footpaths in the undeveloped street right-of-way, where common use has created pathways in the public right-of-way. (i.e., rocky, narrow footpaths with muddy and slippery surfaces during rainy season.)
 - Consolidation Avenue ROW between Nevada Street and 46th
 - Edwards Street ROW between Kelly Ridge Court and Brenda Highlands/Samish Crest Trails
 - Edwards Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
 - Whatcom Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
 - Whatcom Street ROW between West Racine Street and Queen Street
3. Parking on sidewalks: Walking paths in some sections of the Puget Neighborhood are an extension of asphalt with an extruded curb, which seems to create confusion for drivers about the parking availability. Thus, sidewalk access can be impeded by residents or visitors parking cars in designated pedestrian space.
4. Rolled Curbs: Sections of the neighborhood with rolled curbs where the lots also have narrow street frontage and/or lack off-street parking often have parked cars on the sidewalks, which can create barriers to walking. (i.e., in the Magnolia Hills development.)

- **Motorist Challenges for Residential Connectivity**

Some Puget residents report difficulty maneuvering on narrow residential streets (<28' wide – i.e., St. Paul Street between Lakeway and Whatcom). However, narrow streets create less impervious surface and stormwater impact, as well as providing a traffic calming effect to slow vehicles. Therefore, we are not proposing any corrective infrastructure actions. Residents have phoned law enforcement to address illegal parking concerns.

PART THREE – PUGET TRANSPORTATION GOALS (PTG)

PTG 1: Expand Puget Neighborhood transportation options to more fully support pedestrian, bicycle and transit travel for mobility within the neighborhood.

PTG 2: Expand Puget Neighborhood transportation options for accessibility & connectivity to areas outside the neighborhood, especially to nearby employment, educational and cultural centers.

PTG 3: Preserve livability of residents affected by the principal, secondary, and collector arterial streets.

We recognize the great importance of the through-traffic arterials that pass through the residential neighborhood connecting Downtown, The University, the Lakeway Drive and Samish Way corridors, Interstate 5, and outlying neighborhoods together. However, heavy traffic volume as well as possible future changes to flow may have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing and safety of residents living in proximity to these streets. It is the desire of the neighborhood to preserve a sense of cohesive community, and to preserve all residents' safety and wellbeing.

PTG 4: Increase traffic-related safety.

Whether Puget residents travel as pedestrians, bicyclists or motorists, safety is a big concern. With the understanding that state regulations and requirements for each classification of street (such as principal arterial, secondary arterial, collector, and residential street) it is the desire of the neighborhood to use any effective and appropriate method to ensure that traffic speeds are maintained at safe levels and to help drivers feel connected with the people of the neighborhood. On arterial streets, these may include, but are not limited to, special slow zones near schools and curved or limited-view ramps or entryways, trees and planted medians and street edges, signage, bicycle lanes, pedestrian crosswalks, pedestrian bulb-outs, and street lighting. On residential streets, in addition to the above strategies, physical traffic calming measures such as speed humps, rumble strips, or traffic islands/circles may be installed if they meet the criteria stated in Bellingham's Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP).

PTG 5: Improve vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian use and safety along the Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street corridors, in accordance with the proposed Lakeway Urban Village development.

The Lakeway/Lincoln corridors pose many issues to the community, and specific plans for redevelopment must address and include traffic issues in accordance with the

Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, redevelopment to Urban Village standards, and the City's arterial network master planning, traffic access from I-5 to the downtown core and any increase in traffic flow on adjacent arterials. Because there is much work still to be done towards evolving a master Puget Urban Village Redevelopment Plan, our objective here is to emphasize the immediate need for addressing pedestrian and bicycle access and safety issues. We believe that improving pedestrian crossings and bicycle use across the neighborhood and with connections to other neighborhood routes will increase use, and support well any future plans.

PART FOUR – TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND PRIORITIZED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The following Puget Neighborhood transportation policies were developed from discussions at Puget Neighborhood Association (PNA) meetings and the 2008-09 PNA statistically valid survey. It is worth noting that many of the transportation needs identified by Puget neighbors relate most strongly to improving pedestrian and bicyclist access or decreasing the effects of autos on residential streets. A reduction in the need for automobile use to access destinations within the neighborhood can improve conditions for drivers as well, by reducing the number of cars on the road. Lakeway Drive is a WTA high frequency corridor (buses every 15 minutes on weekdays). Therefore, increased utilization of transit along this corridor could have the added benefit of reducing the number of driving trips. Pedestrians' ability to cross Lakeway Drive to access transit stops is key to increasing bus use.

In the neighborhood survey conducted in 2008-09 Puget neighbors identified the top 2 benefits of living in the neighborhood:

- Proximity to downtown 96.1%
- Convenient access to services 85.0%

86% of Puget neighbors use the Lakeway/Lincoln shopping district at least once per week. Nearly 24% use it even more – everyday. Previously mentioned comments in Part 2 identify the challenges to travel and the desire for improved access and increased use of the commercial area.

58% of Puget neighbors walk or bike on Puget arterials at least once a week. More than 28% of those who walk or bike, do not feel at all safe, and 45% feel "somewhat safe". However, more than 49% of drivers feel "very or completely safe". Less than 40% feel "somewhat safe".

Puget Neighborhood Transportation Policies (PTP)

Locations identified with each policy statement are considered to be major problem areas, as identified by the neighborhood residents in the previous section. Possible solutions will require study and, if justified, may or may not include construction at these specific locations. These locations should be considered high priorities when developing transportation solutions for the Puget Neighborhood as a whole.

In addition, the list of Puget Neighborhood projects in the 2005 City of Bellingham

Comprehensive Plan – Transportation section are listed at the end of this section. The policies listed below are meant to inform any planning efforts towards those projects of the vision and values of the Puget Neighborhood. As the comprehensive plan is updated, further identification of Puget Neighborhood projects that embody these priorities can also be included.

- **Future Lakeway/Lincoln Urban Village (per City of Bellingham (COB) Planning Department and/or Development Proposals)**

The sooner an urban village master plan can be completed and adopted for the area encompassing the Lakeway/Lincoln/King/Puget intersections, the sooner the neighborhood will see redevelopment, elimination of driveways/turning conflicts, and transformation of streets by developers.

PTP 1: Develop and promote safe, efficient and appealing access for all users as redevelopment occurs in the urban village (Lakeway/Lincoln area). Access for non-motorized traffic within any commercial, multi-use or multi-family development should be direct to destination, easily accessible and safe.

- Locations Include:
 1. New residential and/or mixed-use development
 2. Redesign or redevelopment of commercial sites and/or rezone to urban village status

- **Access to Commercial and Recreational Centers**

PTP 2: Develop and promote efficient and safe access for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users into, and through, the Lakeway/Lincoln neighborhood center and Civic Field complex with particular attention to solutions that improve access for all users, emphasizing safety and efficiency. Puget Neighborhood preference is to implement solutions that support a mode shift from motorized to walking, bicycling and transit. This may improve conditions for drivers by reducing the number of short car trips to access commercial and recreational destination in the neighborhood.

- Locations and major problem areas include:
 1. Pedestrian safety at intersections (i.e., southeast on Lakeway Drive at Lincoln street)
 2. Impact of commercial driveways on Lakeway Drive's motorized and non-motorized traffic
 3. Impact of 3 stoplights on traffic flow and patterns
 4. Impact of I-5 access
 5. Driveway alignment between Fred Meyer and Lakeway Center parking lots
 6. Pedestrian use of Alley from Nevada Street to Cost Cutter parking lot

7. Lack of landscaped medians and setback multimodal facilities

See also: *COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy Section, TP-9, 46, 50, 57, 63, 64, 66, 75, 78, 81, 82, and Community Design Section, CDP-8, 41, 63, 68, and 77.*

- **Interstate 5 and Related Areas**

The Washington State Department of Transportation has developed an Interstate Master Plan for the Bellingham area (Fairhaven to Slater). Detailed information is available on the WSDOT website*.

This is an excerpt from the “Executive Summary of Improvements”. Included are those projects directly related to the Puget Neighborhood.

“The plan incorporates state and federal transportation policy, transportation analysis, and input from elected officials and local agency staff, stakeholders and members of the community and identifies the following strategies to improve safety and help relieve congestion on I-5:

- Implement a collector-distributor (C/D) system that would connect the Samish Way, Lakeway Drive and Iowa Street interchanges as one “system” with the middle interchange connected only to the C/D
- Preserve space in the median of I-5 for future managed lanes (one lane in each direction) to provide flexibility to accommodate future improvements
- Accommodate non-motorized transportation
- Implement active traffic management improvement including ramp metering
- Replace the existing Samish way interchange with a new interchange
- Build a new single-point urban interchange (SPUI) at Lakeway Drive that is connected only to the C/D roadway
- Build a new SPUI interchange at Iowa Street. The northbound off- and southbound on-ramps at Iowa street would connect to the mainline. The northbound on- and southbound off-ramps would connect to the C/D”

For reference: Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) 2006 data provided by WSDOT identifies the following daily activity at the Lakeway/I-5 on- and off-ramps:

- Southbound on-ramp (from Lakeway Drive to I-5) – 3,358 vehicles
- Southbound off-ramp (from I-5 to Lakeway Drive) – 7,730 vehicles
- Northbound on-ramp (from Lakeway Drive & King Street to I-5) – 8,931 vehicles
- Northbound off-ramp (from I-5 to King Street & Lakeway Drive) – 2,956 vehicles

PTP 3: Promote City efforts to collaborate with WSDOT to manage access to state highways while mitigating impact on local travel – where I-5 affects local driving, walking, bicycling, capacity, safety, attractiveness, access, and increases motorized traffic volume.

- Locations and major problem areas include:
 1. Limited through-access/across I-5 between Meador Avenue and Samish Way – especially affecting pedestrian travel
 2. Pedestrian right-of-way at Lakeway Drive and I-5 underpass (access between York Street and Puget Neighborhoods)
 3. Bicycle safety/efficiency along Lakeway Drive (the route from Ellis Street to King Street, including Lakeway Drive/I-5 underpass)
 4. Complicated vehicle access to northbound ramp
 5. Lakeway Drive/King Street intersection (stoplight backups add to capacity challenges)
 6. Lakeway Drive/Lincoln Street intersection (stoplight backups add to capacity challenges)
 7. Pedestrian lighting at Meador Avenue underpass

See also: COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy section, TP-46, 52, 57, and 90.

- **Arterials – Bike Travel**

Current configuration of the Lakeway Drive and Woburn Street arterials do not have enough physical space to add bike lanes within the built section (curb to curb). New development and re-development along any of the following arterials may provide opportunities to identify locations to improve cyclist access. As with all infrastructure development, funding sources will vary. For example: bike lanes will be constructed by WWU and private developers along the full length of Lincoln Street, between the Samish Way/I-5 overpass and Fred Meyer/Lakeway Center (not including the current commercial shopping area).

PTP 4: Provide facilities for safe and convenient bicycle travel to neighborhood/urban center, park & ride facilities, and through-travel to employment and school destinations in the construction and retrofit of arterials.

- Locations and major problem areas include:
 1. Lakeway Drive between Puget Street and I-5
 2. Lakeway Drive between Woburn Street and Puget Street (north side)
 3. Lincoln Street
 4. Woburn Street
 5. San Juan Boulevard (See PTP-10 for more detailed information)

See also: COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy Section, TP-50, 57, 61, 63, 66, 69, and 90 and Community Design Section, CDP-70.

- **Lakeway Drive Access**

PTP 5: Identify and implement solutions for motorists and bicyclist safety

and efficiency for access to Lakeway Drive from neighborhood streets, where possible.

- Locations include:
 1. Nevada Street across Lakeway Drive (left turns from Nevada Street onto Lakeway Drive)
 2. Lakeway Drive between Racine Street and Verona Street – to/from Lakeway Drive and residential streets (i.e., Racine Street, Toledo Street, Undine Street, and St. Paul Street)

- **Sidewalk Construction**

There are several locations in the Puget Neighborhood that would benefit from sidewalk construction. As mentioned previously, funding sources may vary.

Examples include:

- Local Improvement Districts (LID) funded by the private property owners who live along the street.
- Lincoln Street sidewalks (east side) would be constructed by WWU with the development of the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride.
- Sidewalks on the west side between Fred Meyer parking lot and Byron Street would be constructed by private development between Lincoln Street and I-5.
- Nevada Street sidewalks are currently listed – though not yet funded – in the city Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program.

The following policy statement is intended to articulate the Puget Neighborhood's priorities.

PTP 6: Promote the construction of sidewalks where they would connect neighborhood residents to services, or high-frequency transit, separate foot and motorized traffic, and/or provide needed connectivity.

- Locations include:
 1. Nevada Street between Edwards Street and Consolidation Avenue
 2. Lincoln Street where missing between Lakeway Drive and Byron Street

- **Undeveloped Footpaths Located in the Public Right-of-Way (ROW)**

Topography, history, and development style have limited the through street grid in the Puget Neighborhood. The preponderance of cul-de-sacs, dead-end streets, and the lack of parallel arterial streets have exacerbated the traffic issues due to reliance on Lakeway Drive as the primary corridor for access and mobility throughout the neighborhood.

Several street rights-of-way that have not been constructed are currently used and/or have the potential for use as non-motorized throughways. These Puget Neighborhood policies identify those locations where access could be improved with surface mitigation (i.e., crushed limestone). Funding sources will vary for

these types of projects. Thus, Puget neighbors will work with appropriate City Departments (i.e., Parks to coordinate neighborhood volunteer labor) to identify appropriate public-private funding partnerships.

PTP 7: Provide low-impact surface mitigation where common use has created informal pathways in the public right-of-way. (i.e., rocky, narrow footpaths with muddy and slippery surfaces during rainy season.) These pathways provide safety by separating motorized and non-motorized traffic. Improvement of these paths should be prioritized in places where they increase pedestrian access to neighborhood centers and/or Primary WTA Transit Corridors.

- Locations include:
 1. Whatcom Street between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street
 2. Whatcom Street between W. Racine Street and Queen Street

Because Whatcom Street is parallel to Lakeway Drive, it provides an alternative to Lakeway Drive for pedestrians traveling through the neighborhood. It can be used to connect with Puget Street where a stoplight provides an opportunity to cross Lakeway Drive and access transit stops.

See also COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy Section, TP-61, 69, and 72.

PTP 8: Identify, and develop or improve pedestrian pathways in the undeveloped public rights-of-way (ROW) where they can improve pedestrian connectivity within long residential blocks. Provide low-impact surface mitigation that would improve rocky, narrow footpaths that can be muddy or slippery.

- Locations include:
 1. Consolidation Avenue between Nevada Street and 46th or other nearby access from Toledo Hill to the Lincoln Creek Park & Ride
 2. Edwards Street ROW between Kelly Ridge Court and Brenda Highlands Trail/Samish Crest Trail
 3. Edwards Street ROW between Toledo Street and St. Paul Street

See also COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy Section, TP-61, 72, and 88.

- **Arterials (Lakeway Drive, Lincoln Street, Woburn Street, and Puget Street)**

One suggested solution to improve safety on arterials is to change and/or post speed limits at 25 mph. However, this does not always slow drivers, and can lead to unintended consequences (i.e., the need for constant law enforcement presence).

PTP 9: Develop multiple solutions for arterial-appropriate mitigation where vehicle travel speeds increase concerns for pedestrian safety, and/or where pedestrian travel must cross to access high frequency transit stops.

- Locations include:
 1. Lakeway Drive between Puget Street and Yew Street

2. Puget Street between Edwards Street and Consolidation Avenue
3. Woburn Street at Old Woburn Street

See also COB Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Policy Section, TP-55 regarding arterials: “Encourage the proper setting of speed limits to minimize traffic impact on residential neighborhoods.” And TP-78 “...improve pedestrian crossing safety where pedestrian routes must traverse busy streets”.

- **Future Development of San Juan Boulevard**

The Puget Neighborhood envisions the potential for a completed San Juan Boulevard to divert neighborhood motorists off of Lakeway Drive and to provide access to new development on the hill. Because of the steep topography, there will unlikely be a lot of bicycle through-traffic from Yew Street to Elwood Avenue.

At the same time, the Neighborhood wants to promote easy and safe access across any newly constructed roads, and to ensure that residents making short trips on foot or on bike within the Puget and/or Samish Neighborhoods, will have adequate space to do so – adjacent to or in proximity of – San Juan Boulevard.

PTP 10: Develop multiple crossing locations on San Juan Boulevard – to those local developments which are, or will be, constructed on either side of the street – especially for bicycle and pedestrian access. Include pedestrian routes for access to potential transit stops. Additionally, develop multimodal routes nearby when adjacent pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities are not feasible along the length of San Juan Boulevard.

Map, PUGET NEIGHBORHOOD, Arterial

REFERENCES

From City of Bellingham 2005 Comprehensive Plan:

Puget

Bellingham Comprehensive Plan, Transportation Chapter T-40

Comments

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>Included in 2006-2011 TIP</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Juan Boulevard East/West arterial, including curb, gutter, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes between 48th Street and 40th Street. Project to be completed by LID as development along the route occurs. |
| <i>Included in 2006-2011 TIP</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Fraser Street between the existing Regency Apartments and Lincoln Street with bicycle lanes and curb, gutter, and sidewalks. Phase 1, Fraser between Puget and Lincoln. Phase 2, Fraser from Puget to Regency Apartments. |
| <i>Included in 2006-2011 TIP</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Puget Street from Fraser Street to the terminus of existing sidewalks with curb, gutter and sidewalks. |
| <i>1995 Comprehensive Plan and BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lincoln Street Improvements. Widen pavement and install curbs, sidewalks, street lighting, and bicycle lanes to Lincoln Street, between Ashley and Byron. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersection of Lincoln and Lakeway, limit right turns on red, especially eastbound onto Lakeway. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue median “theme” on Lakeway Drive from west of Interstate 5 to Nevada Street. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalks on Orleans Street from Lakeway to Civic Field Complex. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Consolidation right-of-way between Nevada Street and 46th for pedestrian access. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian access in right of way at Edwards east from Kelly Ridge Court to Brenda Highlands trail. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian access in right of way at Edwards, west from Toledo to unpaved section of St. Paul. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian access in right of way at Whatcom, west from Toledo to unpaved section of St. Paul. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian access in right of way at Whatcom, west from Racine to Queen. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve bicycle safety and efficiency at Lakeway/I-5 Interchange. |
| <i>BPAC recommendation</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve bicycle safety and access at Samish Way and I-5 Interchange. |
| <i>WTA. Will be implemented as funding allows.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WTA second priority future high-frequency transit route on Lakeway Drive from Whatcom Falls Neighborhood Center on Electric Avenue to Downtown Transit Hub. |

Map, PUGET NEIGHBORHOOD, Land Use

VI. SUBAREA DESCRIPTIONS AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Area 1

This is the low lying wet area adjacent to Whatcom Creek and The Civic Field Complex. Predominant existing and approved planned uses are light industrial. A large industrial/office park occupies the westerly half of this area east of Lincoln and north of Fraser Street. A smaller industrial/warehouse complex occupies the east side of the area, west of Valencia Street. There are four houses in the southwest corner of this area. Three of them are being converted to industrial uses.

The importance of the area for hydrological and potential recreation purposes is the reason for the Planned Industrial designation and most of the special conditions.

A twenty-foot easement along the east fork of Cemetery Creek shall be dedicated for pedestrian access as development occurs. Similar easements should be dedicated along Lincoln and Whatcom Creeks, including a 100' greenbelt along Whatcom Creek.

AREA 1 LAND USE DESIGNATION: INDUSTRIAL

Area 2

Due to changes in state and federal wetland regulations and the presence of extensive wetlands, a lower impact use is appropriate. Residential development is intended to take the form of medium rise buildings from two to six stories. Emphasis should be placed on locating development within the upland portions of the property and minimizing impacts to the adjacent wetlands.

Improvement of Fraser Street from Valencia to Puget Street is a prerequisite for development in this area. If a major access from the site extends to Woburn Street on Fraser, an additional half-street dedication along this route will be needed. The Fraser right of way on this site can be redesigned and moved to accommodate development and minimize wetland impact.

The utility corridor along Fraser should be clearly mapped and preserved. The cost of any utility relocation needed for site development shall be borne by the proponents.

A possible use for this site is a transit base. Conditions for transit base construction include:

- Provide residential neighborhood mitigations responsive to the specific needs of the surrounding residential community.
- Provide environmental mitigation, which protects the adjacent wetland, wildlife, and stream areas.
- Complete Fraser Street as a through road, as approved by the Public Works Department.

AREA 2 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 3

This is a steep, wet hillside area with a mixture of old and newer houses, duplexes, and apartment buildings. It is located between the Woburn arterial and the Planned Industrial area west of Valencia Street. The industrial area is only active during normal work hours Monday through Friday, providing a peaceful neighbor to the residents east of Valencia Street in the evenings and on weekends.

AREA 3 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 4

This area is located along Lincoln Creek between the freeway, King Street, Lincoln Street, and The Civic Field Complex. Much of the area is steep. Existing land use is predominantly single family, with a few apartment complexes. The steep hillside and Lincoln Creek flood plain considerations make this area appropriate for medium density residential development.

AREA 4 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 5

This area, known as The Civic Field Complex, includes Downer Fields, a city-owned recreation area, and a wetland complex north of Arbor Street. Wetland areas should be preserved for habitat, water quality, and educational purposes, with only minimal development allowed.

The Civic Field Complex is the site of major citywide recreational facilities, including Downer Fields, Civic Stadium, Joe Martin Field, Frank Geri softball fields, trails, the Bellingham Aquatics Center, and playgrounds.

The Civic Field Task Force and the Parks and Recreation Department recommended improvements to The Civic Field Complex, including upgrading Civic Stadium and Joe Martin Field, constructing Geri #4 softball field, providing more tennis courts, picnic areas, and a skateboard/rollerblade facility, leasing land for an ice rink, completing and implementing a traffic study, placing a light at Puget and Lakeway, extending Potter to Puget, extending Fraser to Woburn, creek restoration, improving parking, improving drainage, improving Fraser Street for bicyclists and pedestrians, and future acquisition of Carl Cozier Elementary School. Impacts on adjacent residents should be minimized.

AREA 5 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC

Area 6

This area, approximately 62,384 sq. ft. is located adjacent to Gladstone Street is largely undeveloped. Three unimproved rights-of-way surround the property and include Arbor Street on the north, Racine Street on the west and St. Paul Street on the east. Two undeveloped alleys divide the property into three parcels. The topography is generally flat with gentle rolling hills. Several small creeks traverse the site and drain to the south in an open space tract across Gladstone Street. Approximately 50 percent of the property are forested wetlands. Public open-space and forested wetlands abut the property to the north and west.

Lydia Place, a non-profit organization, has owned all of Area 6 since 1990. The organization provides citizens who require social services, those who may be homeless or have been abused, or who have a range of disabilities with temporary shelter. One residence is located adjacent to Gladstone Street and provides transitional living and educational programs for up to 18 homeless women and children.

In 1996, as part of the Puget Neighborhood Plan update, Lydia Place increased the density to allow two additional persons to reside at the existing shelter. The number of persons allowed increased from 16 to 18 persons per 33,000 sq. ft. of land. The existing house on the site has been expanded to better serve as a transitional housing for homeless women and children in Bellingham and Whatcom County. A covenant to bind all the parcels owned by Lydia Place is required prior to any development on the property. The covenant runs with the land and shall not be revoked without prior written consent of the City of Bellingham.

AREA 6 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM DENSITY

Area 7

This is a rapidly developing residential area with three small creeks and hillside or wet areas. Multiple new housing developments have added significantly to the housing stock in this area and provided greenway trails. Innovative development techniques have produced quality single-family homes, which are reasonably priced. Higher densities should continue to be located on the flatter, dryer areas, leaving the drainage ways and steep hills open.

AREA 7 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, LOW TO MEDIUM DENSITY

Area 8

This area includes an open segment of Lincoln Creek, which is preserved for storm drainage, passive recreation, habitat, and water quality purposes.

AREA 8 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC**Area 9**

This area is bound by Interstate-5, Lakeway Drive, Lincoln Street and Gladstone Street at the northerly apex. With the area being platted into lots of record, it has developed into smaller retail and office facilities. There is a northbound freeway on- and off-ramp at Potter Street. Because of Carl Cozier Elementary School, traffic should be directed to King Street rather than Lincoln Street. Commercial uses adjacent to Lincoln Creek accessing King Street should get setback relief if the uses are oriented toward the creek. The required yard in this instance could be reduced to three feet from the easterly property line. Site plan review should encourage shared or common access to Lakeway and Lincoln Streets. No retail uses should be permitted directly across from the elementary school.

Only Lots 20-21 and the upper portions of Lots 35-38 in Block 19 above City datum Elevation 110', on the southwest corner of Gladstone and Lincoln Streets, should be developed. Primary access shall be from King Street. Secondary access from the alley to Gladstone Street may be considered. The uses in the half-block east of the King/Lincoln alley and between Potter and Gladstone are limited to parking, warehousing, residential, and other uses accessory to uses in Area 6.

Design considerations shall include: Providing an articulated building facade/roofline if new development is near existing residences; exterior lighting compatible with residential neighborhoods, indirect lighting is recommended; and buildings designed to block as much freeway noise as possible.

AREA 9 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL**Area 10**

This is the site of Carl Cozier School.

AREA 10 LAND USE DESIGNATION: PUBLIC

Area 11

At the intersection of Lakeway Drive and Interstate-5 and extending along Lincoln and Lakeway, this area includes Fred Meyer, The Lakeway Inn, Ennens' Shopping Center, Lakeway Center, and several commercial uses along Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street. Access to Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street should be maintained. In order to minimize impact on residential neighbors near Nevada Street:

- **Access:** No curb cuts on Nevada and Whatcom Streets, except for continued access to Nevada via the alley, to discourage non-residential traffic on residential streets. Maintain the existing accesses to Lakeway Drive and Lincoln Street.
- **Site Development:** Address public safety while providing vegetative buffering or other transition compatible with the residential neighborhood to the east.
- **Commercial development** adjacent to/along Nevada Street should be compatible with the single-family development to the east. Items to be considered may include height, scale, building articulation, screening, noise, lighting, and materials.
- **Apartments** as a permitted use can occupy separate lots with no requirement for commercial development.

AREA 11 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 12

Many of the structures on this four-block area, straddling Lakeway and a commercial area, are single family residences, which are mostly in very good condition. The remaining structures are apartments and condominiums accessible from Orleans Street, with the Foothills being the largest development.

AREA 12 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 13

This includes much of the steep Puget hillside and one of the most intensely developed single family areas of the Puget Neighborhood. New development off of the new San Juan Boulevard includes Pacificview and other plats, which take advantage of the views from the top of Puget and Toledo Hills. The existing land use is single family with a mixture of ages of housing, all in good condition. There are drainage problems, which should be dealt with as a part of new development.

AREA 13 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, LOW DENSITY

Area 14

This vacant area lying between Interstate-5, Fred Meyer, Lincoln Street and Maple Street was formerly a golf course. The area slopes up to the freeway and Lincoln Creek dissects the property. The location of the site adjacent to Interstate-5 and two designated commercial areas and a mobile home park does not lend itself to residential development.

AREA 14 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 15

This is a generally level area, which slopes to the east, and is adjacent to Lincoln Street on the west, Moore Street on the east and Lakeway Center on the north. The site is presently entirely occupied with a mobile home park. The mobile homes are well maintained.

AREA 15 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Area 16

This area is two blocks wide along a gently rising hillside south of Lakeway Drive. There are approximately 40 existing single family houses, most in good condition. Water lines for new development within this area must be carefully designed to provide adequate fire flows. There are also poorly drained spots within this area, which require careful treatment during development. Nevada Street will be extended between Consolidation Avenue and Lakeway Drive when the Hawley's Farm subdivision is developed. Traffic calming devices should be installed on Nevada Street when it is extended.

AREA 16 LAND USE DESIGNATION: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL, LOW DENSITY

Area 17

This is a largely undeveloped area, which includes a new multifamily complex south of Whatcom Street, wetlands, hillsides and areas, which are relatively flat. The area is an ideal multiple housing area, being convenient to town, parks, and commercial areas. Higher densities should be allowed on the level, dry areas, while the wetlands and steep areas should remain open. Water lines for development within this area must be carefully designed to provide adequate fire flow.

AREA 17 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM DENSITY

Area 18

This area includes a low wet area near the freeway and gently sloping terrain. Some of the land is vacant while the rest contains single family houses, a restaurant, and a car wash under construction. Impacts on the Samish Way Interchange should be reviewed prior to approving development in this area.

AREA 18 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 19

This area is occupied by a large multi-family apartment complex in good condition and provides a transition between the commercial designation on the west and south and the lower density residential designation on the east. Any proposal for access directly to or from Lincoln Street should be carefully reviewed to ensure no negative traffic impacts.

AREA 19 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY

Area 20

This area includes the northerly portion of the SRO Outdoor Movie Theater. Impacts on the Samish Way Interchange should be reviewed prior to approving development in this area. Lincoln Creek flows in an asphalt ditch on the north and east sides of the outdoor theater. Lincoln Creek should be maintained in an open condition with streamside vegetation enhancement, appropriate water quality facility installation, and rerouting to allow additional fish passage at the time of site development. Impacts on the Samish Way Interchange should be reviewed prior to approving development in this area.

In order to minimize impacts of large-scale commercial construction on neighbors to the north:

- Address public safety while providing buffering, or equivalent, compatible with adjacent residential areas.
- Use building height, scale, articulation, screening, lighting, materials, and noise buffering to provide an appearance of variety and minimize impacts on the adjacent residential development.
- Enhance Lincoln Creek so it functions as a natural stream environment to improve water quality and habitat.

AREA 20 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 21

This area is next to Interstate-5. It includes gently sloping terrain. Some of the land is vacant; two homes, an espresso stand and a car wash occupy the rest of the area. Mini-storage facilities next to the freeway are an appropriate use for this area to serve the residential development and commercial establishments in the vicinity. A dense buffer of evergreen trees should be installed between any development and I-5. Joint driveway access and signage should be required. Lighting should be oriented down toward the site and away from surrounding residences.

AREA 21 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

As adopted by Ordinance No. 8868 and amended by Ordinances 8946, 9101, 9243, 9271, 9288, 9434, 9472, 9644, 9845, 10046, 10390, 10802, 2004-12-087, 2004-12-090, and 2010-12-069.