

MERIDIAN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

I. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Meridian Neighborhood encompasses the original "Core" area annexed to Bellingham in 1978 as the Guide Meridian Neighborhood, and the 1996 Telegraph/Deemer Annexation area. It is approximately 410 acres, and is bounded by Kellogg Road on the north, Cordata Parkway, Eliza Road, and the eastern edge of Bellis Fair on the west, Interstate-5 (I-5) on the south, and the city limits on the east. This neighborhood is characterized by commercial development, and includes the Bellis Fair regional mall, the neighborhood's most predominant feature, and adjacent shopping areas including: Meridian Plaza, Meridian Place, S.R.O. Center, Meridian Village, Home Base shopping area, Holiday Inn Express, Peoples Place, and shopping areas along Meridian Street, Bakerview Road, Cordata Parkway, and Kellogg Road. The neighborhood is considered part of a larger Urban Development Center encompassing the Cordata and West Bakerview areas. Meridian has both expansion and redevelopment capacity.

Two major transportation corridors traverse the neighborhood, providing access to a network of roads that serve Meridian's commercial centers, residential developments on its periphery, and adjoining neighborhoods. Meridian Street, the most heavily traveled arterial in the city, provides the most direct route from the north to Bellingham, and links the city to areas north in Whatcom County and the Canadian Border. Bakerview Road is the principal east-west arterial providing direct access to the Bellingham International Airport, and adjacent industrial and commercial areas to the west, and to the industrial corridor along Hannegan and Bakerview Roads to the east.

Topography of the area includes two draws generally fanning from the Guide Meridian corridor to the northwest and northeast. The street rises slightly to the north through the neighborhood with bluffs paralleling the roadway on each side. Slopes are generally less than 15% (except for several bluffs located in Areas 12 along Interstate-5, adjacent to Meridian Street from the intersection of I-5 and Telegraph Road north to Westerly Road, and Bakerview Road adjacent to Areas 3 and 5. Soils are generally stable. The predominant soil is classified as Bellingham Drift (Q6) which is a pebbly silty clay.

The Meridian Neighborhood lies in the Squalicum Creek drainage basin, and the Baker Creek Sub-Basin. Baker Creek and its tributary flows east to west through the eastern portion of the neighborhood generally between East Bakerview Road and McLeod Road. Spring Creek, a major tributary of Baker Creek, flows in a wide ravine from the northeast along the eastern boundary of the neighborhood between Kellogg Road and East Bakerview Road, across the north part of Area 5, and diagonally to the southwestern portion of the neighborhood. The tributary to Spring Creek located west of Meridian Street extends in a wide ravine running west to east across the north part of Area 4 and then diagonally to the southeast corner of the area.

As a result of significant development in the neighborhood, portions of these creeks and their tributaries are now almost entirely conveyed in a pipe system. Some natural vegetation and clusters of conifers and deciduous trees can be found along the open creek beds. Wetlands associated with the creek corridors will continue to be important for floodwater attenuation, fish habitat, and water quality.

HISTORY

The commercial "Core" area of the Meridian Neighborhood was annexed to Bellingham in 1978 as the Guide Meridian Neighborhood. Between 1978 and 1996, eleven annexations increased the size of the neighborhood from approximately 330 acres by adding over 1300 acre. During this same period, the planning areas grew from the original 12 areas to 40 areas. Unlike Bellingham's other neighborhoods, the Guide Meridian Neighborhood became distinguished by its predominance of commercial zoning and development. Multi-family residential development became situated at the periphery of the neighborhood.

As a result of fifteen years of continuous growth in the neighborhood, and significant changes in zoning and land use, the Meridian Neighborhood was created as part of Bellingham's 1995 Neighborhood Plan Update process. This new neighborhood, comprising the original commercial "core" area of the Guide Meridian Neighborhood, and the 1996 Telegraph/Deemer Annexation area, forms a distinctive neighborhood of primarily commercial land use patterns and development. A unique *Meridian Commercial District* is identified, and the existing Guide Meridian Neighborhood design guidelines have been replaced with commercial development guidelines based on concepts of identity, connectivity, boundaries, natural systems, and design.

Because of its location and interface with Bellingham's Northern Urban Growth Area (UGA) in Whatcom County's Urban Fringe Subarea, the Meridian Neighborhood will continue to grow, both from future annexations and from increased development and redevelopment opportunities.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PROPOSALS

II. OPEN SPACE

The intensive commercial pattern of development in the neighborhood limits the kinds of open space opportunities to greenbelts along the streams and natural drainage channels. Several tributaries of Baker Creek, including Spring Creek, traverse the neighborhood and serve an important hydrological function, as well as providing an opportunity for a lineal greenbelt open space system through the area.

In July 1985, the City acquired a 2.5-acre open space area as part of the Ankar Subdivision. The area includes parcels D and E of the Ankar Short Plat. In 1996, a

Conservation Easement was established downstream of the Ankar site including 1.8 acres along Spring Creek. Additional greenbelt open spaces should be acquired and developed along Spring Creek as development occurs.

As regulated streams, Baker Creek and Spring Creek and their tributaries should continue to be protected and adequate stream buffers established. Open spaces should include buffers along Spring Creek, Baker Creek and their tributaries, and landscaping between commercial and residential uses. Whenever feasible, significant trees located adjacent to these creeks should be preserved and incorporated into the open space landscaping pattern of future development. Active recreational parks are a low priority for this commercial/auto oriented neighborhood, but should be considered when property, zoned for residential development is annexed to the neighborhood.

OPEN AREAS, INCLUDING CONSOLIDATED OUTDOOR OR INDOOR AREA FOR PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS, PARKS OR SEATING AREAS SHOULD BE REQUIRED AS PART OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS OVER 20,000 SQUARE FEET OF GROSS FLOOR AREA.

NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NORTH/SOUTH TRAIL ALONG THE SPRING CREEK AND BAKER CREEK CORRIDORS WITH CONNECTIONS TO PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS LINKING COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT OF LINEAR PUBLIC GREENWAYS AND NETWORK OF CONNECTING TRAILS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED WITHIN THE SPRING CREEK AND BAKER CREEK CORRIDORS.

GREENBELT OPEN SPACES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED ALONG THE STREAMS AND NATURAL DRAINAGE CHANNELS AS DEVELOPMENT OCCURS.

LANDSCAPING SHOULD BE MAINTAINED AND/OR PROVIDED ALONG INTERSTATE-5 AS DEVELOPMENT OCCURS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD TO PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE VIEW FROM THE FREEWAY.

WHEREVER FEASIBLE, SIGNIFICANT EXISTING TREES SHOULD BE PRESERVED AND INCORPORATED INTO THE SITE DESIGN AND OPEN SPACE/LANDSCAPING PATTERNS OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

III. PUBLIC FACILITIES

Drainage

The Meridian Neighborhood lies in the Squalicum Creek drainage basin, and the Baker/Spring Creek Sub-Basin. Baker Creek, Spring Creek and several of their unnamed tributaries traverse the neighborhood. As part of a larger area, the

neighborhood is served by regional storm water facilities located at Telegraph Road east of Deemer, Hannegan Road north of Bakerview Road, and detention ponds located within the Cordata Business Park. These facilities have been accounted for within the Watershed Master Plan (1995) and play a valuable role in lowering the risk of flooding within the area.

The creeks running through the neighborhood have been impacted by intensive commercial development, and portions of these creeks are now almost entirely conveyed in a pipe system. The unnamed tributary of Baker Creek flows behind Home Base store, east of Meridian Street between East Bakerview Road and Telegraph Road. Spring Creek and its tributaries are the primary drainage for the majority of the neighborhood area. The lower portions of the Spring Creek system have been significantly altered. Existing channelization and encroachment has degraded the system particularly in the developed Meridian corridor. Some downstream channels have little function other than providing conveyance. Upper portions of the streams, as they diverge from Meridian, are more pristine and have greater resource value. Future development in these areas must be designed to maintain these areas to the greatest extent possible.

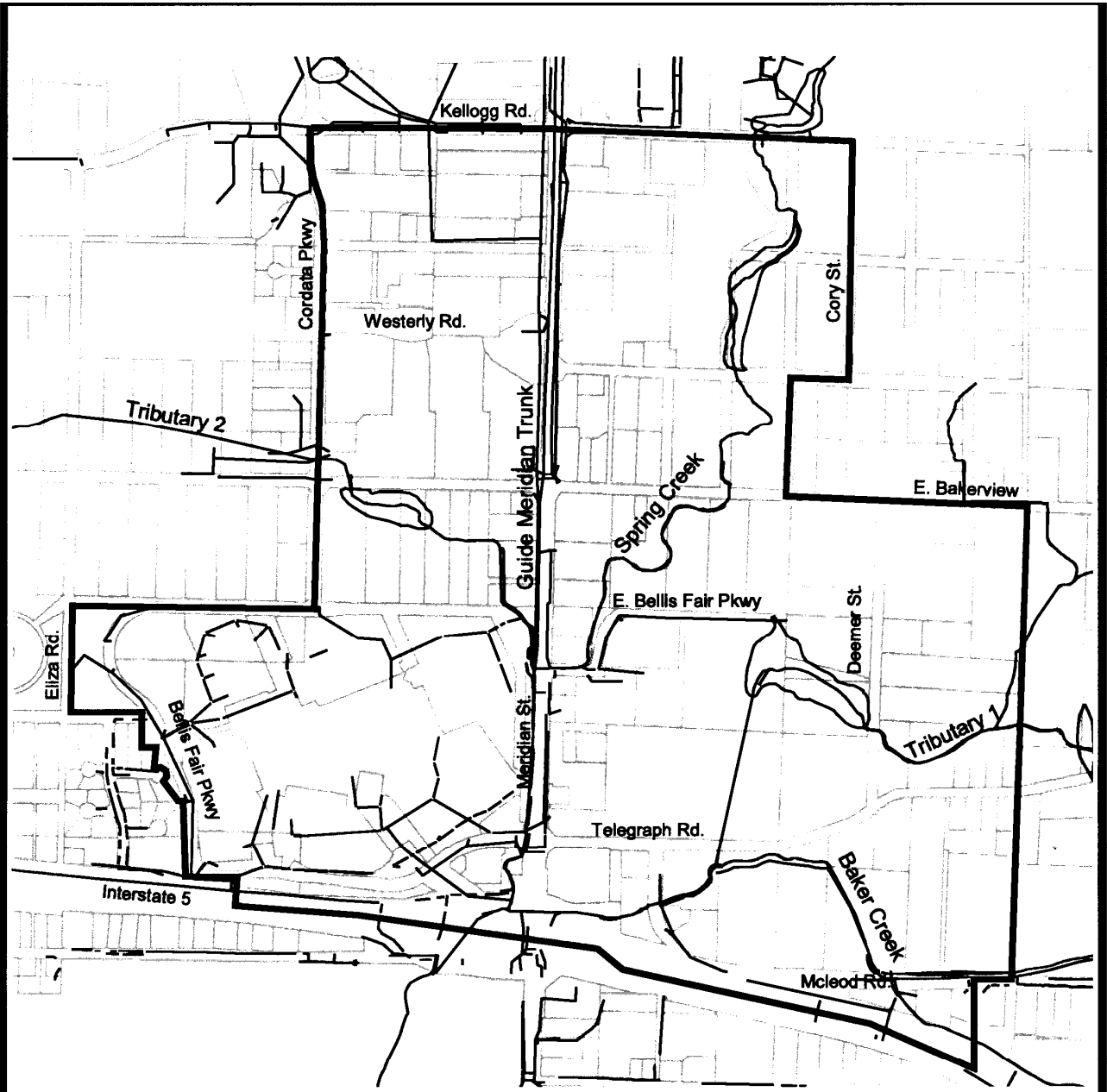
The City of Bellingham Watershed Master Plan (1995) indicates that Baker Creek and its tributaries have natural storage areas within their channels and associated wetlands. Natural storm water storage areas should be maintained to aid in the prevention of downstream flooding. All development must comply with the Watershed Master Plan, and its regulating ordinance. Those areas within FEMA designated flood areas must comply with floodplain requirements.

Storm water runoff from impervious surfaces associated with commercial development along McLeod Road, Bakerview Road, Telegraph Road, and Meridian Street typically contribute a substantial amount of nonpoint pollution. On site storm water retention facilities should be installed at planned developments to maintain storm water peak runoff rates no greater than pre-development levels. New development should also include swales to improve sediment removal and biological uptake. Efforts should be made to preserve wetland areas for their water quality enhancement function.

Storm water management for large developments generally include requirements for detention, water quality and erosion control. It is the policy of the City to encourage innovative strategies in dealing with the management of storm water. To the greatest extent possible, facilities should be designed to maximize the amount of property that may be served and lower overall maintenance. Property owners are encouraged to participate in development of joint facilities for storm water management. Redesign and improvements to existing storm water facilities to improve water quality should be incorporated in future public and private projects whenever possible. These storm water facility improvements should be funded with public/private resources.

THE BAKER CREEK FLOOD PLAIN AND ITS TRIBUTARIES SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN THEIR NATURAL CONDITION TO PROVIDE CHANNEL STORAGE FOR STORM WATER RUN-OFF.

ON-SITE STORM WATER RETENTION FACILITIES SHOULD BE INSTALLED IN PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS TO MAINTAIN STORM WATER PEAK RUN-OFF RATES NO GREATER THAN PRE-DEVELOPMENT LEVELS.



MERIDIAN STORMWATER

Meridian Neighborhood

City of Bellingham
Planning and Community Development
July 1997



Water

The Meridian Neighborhood is served by two water pressure zones. The North 276 zone supplies water and fire flow to areas south of Bakerview Road, and the Cordata 350 pumped pressure zone services areas to the north of Bakerview with both domestic water and fire flow. The water main distribution system will accommodate continued growth within this neighborhood. Some minor system improvements may need to occur in order to account for increased demands from infill and from the possible expansion of existing commercial facilities. Those improvements will be required as development occurs.

Sanitary Sewer

This neighborhood is served by a sanitary sewer trunk line extending north along Meridian Street, which flows into the Squalicum Creek interceptor south of Interstate-5 to Roeder Avenue. The facilities are generally in good condition. The installation of new sanitary lateral and submains will be a requirement for development within the remaining vacant areas. Adequate sewer capacity for development outside the Meridian Neighborhood is a concern within this area as several existing trunk mains may need replacement to accommodate total build out scenarios. Sewer mains within Areas 4 and 5 and north of Bakerview along Guide Meridian have been identified as requiring upsizing when specific levels of development occur upstream. These facility improvements would not inhibit growth in this neighborhood specifically, but future development may be impacted during the replacement program.

MAP, MERIDIAN ARTERIAL ROUTES

IV. CIRCULATION

Meridian's transportation system provides direct routes to Bellingham from the north, east and west. Two primary arterials provide linkage between major population areas, employment and shopping centers; three secondary arterials collect and distribute traffic between neighborhoods and commercial areas; and three collector arterials provide for traffic needs within the neighborhood.

Arterials

Meridian Street serves as the primary north/south arterial in this neighborhood, and is the most heavily traveled arterial in the City. With over 32,000 vehicles per day (1996) between Telegraph and Bakerview, Meridian Street is a major transportation facility in the city. As the most direct route into Bellingham from the north, and with anticipated widening of the Guide Meridian Street north of the city, Meridian Street will most likely remain the most heavily traveled arterial in the city.

The development of commercial and industrial uses along the entire length of Meridian Street has significantly impacted the area with increased traffic volume, congestion, and accidents, and creates the potential for curb cuts for numerous entrances and exits to adjacent and interior development.

NO LOCAL ACCESS TO MERIDIAN STREET SHOULD BE ALLOWED WITHIN 300 FEET (PREFERABLY 600 FEET) OF MAJOR INTERSECTIONS. ACCESS POINTS SHOULD BE AT LEAST 300 FEET AND IDEALLY, 600 FEET APART. INTERNAL SERVICE ROADS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED TO CONNECT PROPERTIES WITH SHARED ACCESS ROADS LEADING TO MERIDIAN STREET. DRIVEWAYS ALLOWING FOR INTERNAL CIRCULATION BETWEEN COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. USE OF CORDATA PARKWAY AND DEEMER ROAD (WHEN EXTENDED NORTHWARD) SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AS ACCESS ROUTES TO COMMERCIAL USES FACING MERIDIAN.

Bakerview Road is the primary east/west arterial in this neighborhood providing a direct access between the neighborhood and Interstate-5, Bellingham International Airport, and industrial areas to the east and west of Meridian Street. Traffic volumes in 1995 were 14,300 vehicles per day creating low levels of service for this two-lane facility. Bakerview Road improvements scheduled for completion in 1998 will upgrade this road to principal urban arterial standards to include two lanes of traffic and bike lanes in each direction with a center double left turn from Deemer Road to Interstate-5.

NO LOCAL ACCESS TO BAKERVIEW ROAD SHOULD BE ALLOWED WITHIN 300 FEET (PREFERABLY 600 FEET) OF MAJOR INTERSECTIONS. ACCESS POINTS SHOULD BE AT LEAST 300 FEET AND IDEALLY, 600 FEET APART. INTERNAL CIRCULATION BETWEEN COMMERCIAL SITES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED THROUGH THE USE OF INTERNAL DRIVEWAYS AND TRAFFIC DESIGN.

Secondary Arterials

Cordata Parkway, Bellis Fair Parkway, and segments of Telegraph Road, and Kellogg Road comprise the secondary arterials in this neighborhood. Cordata Parkway with over 13,000 vehicles per day (1996) serves as the main north/south link west of Meridian Street from Bellis Fair mall to Horton Road, outside the neighborhood. Bellis Fair Parkway serves as the shopping mall perimeter road linking Telegraph Road and Cordata Parkway. Kellogg Road serves as the east/west connector between Cordata Parkway and Meridian Street, and extends east along the northern boundary of the neighborhood. Telegraph provides the east/west linkage between Bellis Fair Mall and Deemer Road, and to James Street outside the neighborhood boundary.

Collector Arterials

Deemer Road is planned as a future north/south connector paralleling Meridian Street on the east and serving the same function as Cordata Parkway- to reduce Meridian Street traffic. Improvements to Deemer Road between Telegraph Road and Bakerview Road are scheduled for 2002, and include pavement widening, curbs, gutters, storm drainage, bike lanes, sidewalks and street lighting. The exact alignment of Deemer Road north of Bakerview to Kellogg Road will be determined and constructed as development of adjacent property occurs. Other neighborhood collectors include Eliza Road (formerly Allans Road), and parts of Westerly and Kellogg Road.

DEEMER ROAD SHOULD BE EXTENDED NORTHWARD FROM BAKERVIEW TO KELLOGG ROAD TO SERVE AS A NORTH/SOUTH CONNECTOR EAST OF MERIDIAN STREET PROVIDING THE SAME FUNCTION AS CORDATA PARKWAY WEST OF MERIDIAN. ELIZA ROAD SHOULD BE CONSTRUCTED PRIVATELY AS DEVELOPMENT OCCURS. FUTURE SIGNALIZATION OF THE BAKERVIEW/ELIZA ROAD INTERSECTION SHOULD OCCUR WHEN WARRANTED.

Residential Streets

There are platted, undeveloped street rights-of-way within the neighborhood. Some of these streets would be very expensive and destructive to natural features if developed as originally planned. They would also limit attempts to design future developments in a manner more sensitive to the existing natural systems and land use/traffic conditions of the area. Residential land use designations in the neighborhood provide for apartment construction at relatively high densities. Streets in these areas should be improved to accommodate such development.

AS THIS AREA DEVELOPS, EXISTING UNDEVELOPED BUT PLATTED RIGHTS-OF-WAY SHOULD BE SELECTIVELY VACATED AND NEW STREET SYSTEMS WHICH ARE MORE COMPATIBLE WITH NATURAL FEATURES AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS SHOULD BE DEDICATED AND BUILT.

THE RECOMMENDED RESIDENTIAL STREET STANDARD FOR THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS A 36 FOOT WIDE STREET WITH CURBS, GUTTERS, STORM DRAINAGE, STREET LIGHTS, A PLANTING STRIP AND SIDEWALKS.

Pedestrian Facilities

A significant number of housing units have been built in this neighborhood since 1980, and are located on the periphery of the eastern boundary between Kellogg Road and Bakerview Road. Residential development at higher densities is expected to continue as areas are annexed to the neighborhood. Because of the close proximity to shopping areas, many residents choose to walk rather than drive for the short distances. Accordingly, adequate pedestrian facilities are required for all street and parking lot construction to provide safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and the disabled.

SIDEWALKS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN ALL ROAD AND PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENTS.

Bicycle Facilities

The Meridian neighborhood has the potential for providing bike-friendly surroundings and convenient bike travel corridors. Cyclists are potential customers, and often employees in the Meridian Neighborhood, and as such, the area should be more accessible and secure for bicycle travel.

There are existing segments of bicycle corridors established in the Meridian Neighborhood. These bike corridors should link up with those of adjacent neighborhoods to provide a safe, secure network of bicycle facilities.

BIKE CORRIDOR NETWORK

A network of bike facilities is proposed to assist bike travel in the neighborhood. Efforts should be made to make the I-5/Meridian Street underpass more bike and pedestrian friendly, since it is a major connection to the south and other areas in the city. Several informal links to the core shopping areas exist. These should be upgraded to all-weather bike or multi-use paths. Curb cuts should be provided along with bollards to prevent motorized traffic when possible.

With the development of apartments and condominiums in the eastern section of the Meridian Neighborhood, east/west bike corridors should be provided to shopping and commercial areas. Some of the existing roads are of sufficient width to provide a safe biking corridor at this time. Future in-fill and developments may require striping of bike

lanes and on-street parking restrictions to maintain safe bike routes. Bike lanes on the rebuilt Bakerview Road will be a major east/west bike corridor.

BIKE CORRIDORS SHOULD BE SIGNED OR OTHERWISE MARKED TO SHOW A DESTINATION OF THE CORRIDOR.

THE SHORT MULTI-USE PATH LINKING THE END OF STERLING DRIVE TO BELLIS FAIR PARKWAY SHOULD BE IMPROVED AND INCLUDE A CURB RAMP TO PROVIDE SAFER ACCESS FROM THE ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOOD AND LARGER COMMUNITY TO BELLIS FAIR MALL.

THE SHORT MULTI-USE PATH LINKING THE MOBILE HOME PARK ON ELIZA ROAD (OUTSIDE THE MERIDIAN NEIGHBORHOOD) TO THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE BELLIS FAIR PARKING LOT (IN THE MERIDIAN NEIGHBORHOOD) SHOULD BE IMPROVED AND INCLUDE A CURB RAMP TO ALLOW SAFER ACCESS TO BELLIS FAIR MALL.

EXISTING BUSINESSES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO UPGRADE EXISTING BIKE RACKS, AND PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RACKS WHENEVER POSSIBLE. EMPLOYERS MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER PROVIDING BIKE STORAGE LOCKERS FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES.

BICYCLE LANES SHOULD BE INCLUDED ON ARTERIAL STREETS WHENEVER FEASIBLE.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

In their 1993-1998 Public Transportation Plan Update, the Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) has identified the need for a transit center to serve the north end of Bellingham and northwest Whatcom County. Due to the high rate of growth expected for the Bellingham/Whatcom County area, public transportation will play an increasingly important role in the community. WTA recommendations regarding facility needs and functional requirements should be considered during project design and review.

Street and site designs that maximize public transportation travel opportunities should be encouraged. Design attributes that accommodate public transportation include:

1. A connecting street network that facilitates the direct movement of transit vehicles and accommodates their functional requirements;
2. Bus stops, bus pullouts and covered waiting areas at major boarding locations; and
3. Walkways linking buildings to boarding locations, abutting developments and arterial streets.

BUS STOPS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AT LOCATIONS RECOMMENDED BY WHATCOM TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY. WALKWAYS SHOULD CONNECT BUILDING ENTRANCES TO BUS LOADING FACILITIES.

V. MERIDIAN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The Meridian Commercial District is located at the intersection of Interstate-5 and Meridian Street, a state highway. Bellis Fair Regional Mall occupies a major portion of the district. The mall, together with the commercial development extending north and east adjacent to Meridian Street, Bakerview Road, and Cordata Parkway, constitutes the largest retail center in the county. Its importance as a destination for shoppers, a work place and a major highway entry to Bellingham justifies the attention to design elements given to other major commercial districts in the community.

THE MERIDIAN COMMERCIAL CORE AREA SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED AS A UNIQUE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT WITH A DISTINCT BOUNDARY. FURTHER PLANNING FOR THIS AREA SHOULD BE DONE WHICH FOCUSES ON PHYSICAL DESIGN OBJECTIVES INCLUDING CIRCULATION PLANNING FOR PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES AND VEHICLES; SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES; PROTECTION AND INTEGRATION OF NATURAL SYSTEMS AND AMENITIES AND DEFINITION OF DISTINCT DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.

Most of the land has been developed with one story "big box" retail and similar uses designed primarily to facilitate easy automobile access. Although this will likely remain a primary characteristic of development in the short term, future development and redevelopment of commercial uses should improve convenience, safety and comfort for pedestrians and accommodate alternative modes of transportation.

The district has evolved over the past 20 years from small commercial developments scattered along the state highway to larger blocks of shopping centers, motels and offices. The diversity of ownership, parcel size and construction schedules has complicated the attainment of a cohesive circulation pattern. A mixture of linked parking lot access drives and frontage road easements has been used to provide vehicle access routes between public streets. Additional physical planning in this neighborhood should give particular attention to the location and design of these connections due to their important role as an extension of the circulation system.

In addition to being the connecting network of a unified commercial center, the district's streets are an important design element. Street trees, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, crosswalks and other street features have a significant impact on the character of this district. Although the main streets in this district have been constructed, there may be methods to enhance the street environment through selection of landscaping and street furniture. Opportunities should be investigated for improving the appearance of street corridors both in the right-of-way and along the street fronts of commercial properties.

The continued trend toward chain marketing and warehouse retail outlets is changing the nature of the area's streetscape. Plain box buildings and over-size parking lots can overwhelm Bellingham's community identity or "sense of place" and often fail to provide adequate amenities at a pedestrian scale. The Meridian business community should be encouraged to work with design professionals and the City to develop design guidelines that contribute to a defined "district character" and promote its long term viability.

Incorporating natural topographical features into site designs is important in retaining both their natural functions and the area's sense of place. The streams, ravines and other major natural features of the district should be treated as an asset and enhanced as a significant design element.

MERIDIAN COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The following concepts form the basis for Meridian Commercial District development and design policies:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Identity: | Identification of the core commercial area in this neighborhood as a unique district with its own function and design identity |
| 2. Connectivity: | Implementation of a multi-modal circulation plan |
| 3. Boundaries: | Definition of district boundaries and provision of an appropriate interface with adjacent land use areas |
| 4. Natural Systems: | Preservation of natural topographical features and systems and incorporation of these elements into development design |
| 5. Design: | Encouragement of public and private facility designs that enhance pedestrian access, provide pedestrian amenities and promote the design identity of the district |

The design guidelines listed in the Meridian Neighborhood zoning table section of the Land Use and Development Code are to be used in the preparation of planned development contracts in the Meridian Neighborhood and as the basis for development of future, more specific design standards.

Meridian Neighborhood Land Use Map

SECTION VI. SUBAREA DESCRIPTIONS AND LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Area 1

Most of this area consists of a shopping center known as Cordata Place. Area 1 is approximately 40 acres in size and is bounded by Bakerview Road on the south, Meridian Street on the east, Division Street on the north and Cordata Parkway on the west. The area is relatively flat with two major tributaries to Spring Creek traversing the area. One tributary runs north of and parallel to Bakerview while the other originates from the East of Cordata Parkway near Stuart Road and flows south and east to Meridian Street. Both of these streams in this area have been heavily impacted by development and are now almost entirely conveyed in a pipe system.

The section of Westerly Road in this area is a private road without sidewalks or walkways. Any major redevelopment in this area should include the addition of pedestrian walkways to this street. Cordata Parkway, a secondary arterial, borders the west side of this site and serves commercial uses on both sides of the street. New or redesigned developments should present a pedestrian oriented front along street sides with parking to the side and rear of buildings.

Vegetation buffers including trees should be retained between service/loading areas and streets. Grade changes should incorporate landscaping and terracing whenever possible rather than tall retaining walls. Remaining open stream sections and their vegetation buffers should be retained and enhanced.

AREA 1 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 1A

This area is approximately 28 acres in size and is bounded on the north by Kellogg Road, on the east by Meridian Street, on the south by Short (Division) Street, and on the west by Cordata Parkway. The area is relatively flat. It is characterized by both commercial and manufacturing uses, several of which existed prior to annexation to the city. Access to this area from Meridian Street should be consolidated to Division Street and Kellogg Avenue.

Limited light manufacturing uses are allowed (see the Meridian Neighborhood zoning table section of the Land Use and Development Code) and should be buffered from adjacent commercial development to mitigate any possible adverse effects. There should be no outside storage of raw materials.

Existing trees should be incorporated into landscaping designs when feasible. New and remodeled structures should provide a pedestrian oriented front to all street sides, with service and loading facilities to the interior of the site and screened from public view.

Industrial uses should provide landscaping and pedestrian walkways along street frontages in the same manner as commercial uses. Outdoor storage and loading areas for industrial sites should be located away from street fronts and screened from public view.

AREA 1A LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 2

This area is approximately 30 acres in size, and is bounded on the north by Kellogg Road, on the south by East Bakerview Road, and on the west by Meridian Street. The eastern boundary extends approximately 330 feet east from Meridian Street. The land slopes up from Meridian Street to a hillcrest, which runs roughly along the eastern edge of the area. Characterized by commercial development, the area includes the Holiday Inn Express, Meridian Center, Bellingham Business Park, and other small office and commercial uses.

Access should be designed to conform to the standards in the circulation section of the plan, and in accordance with the Meridian Curb Cut Ordinance. No new access to Meridian Street should be permitted to accommodate only an individual use. Access to Kellogg should be limited to one curb cut at least 150 feet from the Meridian intersection. North and south access points should be encouraged and aligned where possible. Joint access agreements to provide a service road at the rear of lots located on Meridian should be required. New and remodeled structures should provide a pedestrian oriented front to all street sides, with service and loading facilities to the interior of the sites and screened from public view.

Permitted uses include commercial and limited light manufacturing (see the Meridian Neighborhood zoning table in the Land Use Code). Limited industrial uses should be buffered from adjacent commercial development and residential uses. Industrial uses should provide landscaping and pedestrian walkways along street frontages in the same manner as commercial uses. Outdoor storage and loading areas for industrial sites should be located away from street fronts and screened from public view.

AREA 2 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 3

This area is approximately 40 acres in size, and is bounded on the north by Kellogg Road, on the south by East Bakerview Road, and by the centerline of vacated Cory Street on the east. Its western boundary is approximately 660 feet by east from Meridian Street. The area is characterized by residential development and includes

Bakerview Terrace Apartments, located between Prince Avenue and Bakerview Road, Ankar Residential Development for seniors, located between Prince Avenue and Kellogg Road, and the assisted living facility, Highgate House, located west of Ankar, and south of Kellogg Road.

Except for one single family dwelling unit, the eastern 10 acres of the area adjacent to vacated Cory Street is vacant pasture land with some existing groves of trees. Development in this area will be required to improve Kellogg Road and Prince Avenue adjacent to property boundaries, dedicate right-of-way for Cory Street between Prince Avenue and Kellogg Road, and improve Cory Street to standards listed in the Meridian Neighborhood Zoning Table in the Land Use Code. Access should be designed to conform to the standards recommended in the Circulation section of this plan.

Spring Creek, a major tributary of Baker Creek runs north/south through a fairly wide ravine the entire length of the area. Existing groves of trees extend along this ravine, and should be protected. Spring Creek in this area has a FEMA designated flood plain. Planned contracts regulate development of the residential sites. A minimum of 25% of Bakerview Terrace is provided in open space. That portion of Spring Creek traversing the property is to be maintained in its natural state, and no development is to occur within 15 feet upland of the top of the bank. In July 1985, the City acquired a 2.5-acre open space area located along Spring Creek south of Kellogg Road. This area is also protected from encroaching development, and provides improved quality of life for residents in the Ankar development.

Residential development of vacant portions of the area should not occur within the low, wet ravine of Spring Creek. The creek and its adjacent wetlands and vegetation buffer should be retained in a natural condition. Particular attention should be paid to retaining existing trees six inches in diameter or more should be retained wherever possible.

AREA 3 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 3A

This area is approximately 38 acres in size, and is bounded on the north by Kellogg Road, on the south by East Bakerview Road, by the centerline of vacated Cory Street on the west, and by the eastern edge of the Landon Avenue right-of-way on the east. Area 3A provides a transition between the intense commercial development along the Meridian Street corridor and the predominantly single-family residential character of the URMX zone in the Urban Growth Area to the east.

Except for one single-family dwelling unit, the area adjacent to vacated Cory Street is vacant land with some existing groves of trees. Development in this area will be required to improve Kellogg Road and Prince Avenue adjacent to property boundaries,

dedicate right-of-way for Cory Street between Prince Avenue and Kellogg Road, and improve Cory Street to arterial standards.

Deemer Road plays a key role in the development of Area 3A. Development will be required to finance and build a new arterial section between the East Bakerview Road/Deemer Road intersection and the Cory Street/Prince Avenue intersection. When completed, the Deemer Road arterial will serve multi-family residential development in the eastern portions of the Meridian and Guide Meridian Neighborhoods and provide an alternative north/south route to the Meridian Street corridor.

AREA 3A LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, HIGH DENSITY

Area 4

This area is approximately 17 acres in size. It is bounded by West Bakerview Road on the north, Meridian Street on the east, Cordata Parkway on the west and Bellis Fair Parkway on the south. The west tributary to Spring Creek is located in a wide ravine running west to east across the north part of area and then diagonally to the southeast corner. There should be no development within this ravine. The stream and its adjacent wetlands and vegetation buffer should be retained in a natural condition with particular attention to retaining large existing trees should be retained whenever possible.

Access should be designed to conform to the standards recommended in the Circulation section of this plan and to avoid crossing the stream ravine if possible. The developer shall seek access from Bellis Fair Parkway or Cordata Parkway. Joint access designs are encouraged where feasible. North and south access points should be aligned where possible.

Development in this area will require widening Cordata Parkway to accommodate left turn storage for the mid-block access points, and access from Cordata Parkway shall be limited to the existing location. There shall be a dedication of right-of-way along Cordata Parkway.

The sanitary sewer in this area is subject to potential replacement to accommodate future development connecting to the sewer system upstream.

AREA 4 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 5

This area is approximately 20 acres in size, and is bounded by East Bakerview Road on the north, Meridian Street on the west, and East Bellis Fair Parkway and the Home Base shopping center on the south. Its eastern boundary is approximately 660 feet east of Meridian Street. Spring Creek, a major tributary of Baker Creek is located in a ravine running across the north part of the area, and extending diagonally to the southwestern portion of the area.

Spring Creek in this area has a FEMA designated floodplain. As development occurs, a greenbelt should be maintained along the creek and natural drainage channels. Significant existing trees should be preserved and incorporated into the open space and landscaping plans for new development. Non-motorized circulation should be encouraged by development of a trail along Spring Creek. The stream and its adjacent wetlands and vegetation buffer should be retained in a natural condition. No structure, hard surfacing, fill or excavation within 30 feet of the ordinary high water mark of the Spring Creek is permitted.

Access to the area should be designed to conform to the standards recommended in the Circulation section of this plan. Bakerview Road should be limited to one curb cut at least 300 feet from the Meridian intersection. Access to the area should be consolidated at a single point on Bakerview Road, and another access point from East Bellis Fair Parkway, designed to serve the back portion of this area. North and south access points should be aligned where possible.

As a requirement for development along Meridian Street, a frontage road was constructed by the current uses running parallel to Meridian Street. The road provides direct access to lots 1 and 2 of Wendy's Short Plat. Pedestrian walkways are provided from the sidewalk on Meridian Street to the entrances of buildings.

Street trees are located every 50 feet along Meridian Street. No additional access should be permitted to accommodate only an individual use along Meridian Street.

AREA 5 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 6

This subarea of approximately 17 acres, is located generally between Deemer Road on the east and the Home Base shopping center and Area 5 on the west. East Bakerview Road forms the area's northern boundary. The southern boundary is approximately 200 feet north of the Telegraph and Deemer intersection. A church is located at the southwest corner of East Bakerview and Deemer Road, and one single-family dwelling is centrally located between the church site on the north and the southern boundary. The topography is generally flat in the northern portion of the area adjacent to East Bakerview Road and Deemer Road with gentle rolling hills in the southern portion of the

area. Baker Creek traverses the area in a southeasterly to northwesterly direction, and provides an important hydrological function. In addition, the creek provides an opportunity for a lineal greenbelt open space system through the southern portion of the area. As development occurs, the creek should be protected and retained in an open drainage status, and incorporated into the site design. Vegetative buffers should be maintained along the stream and the area's natural drainage channels.

This area provides a logical transition between the commercial areas to the west and south, and the residential single area to the east. Consideration should be given to access from Deemer Road, internal circulation, protection of the Baker Creek corridor, drainage, buffers, and site design. East Bellis Fair Parkway should be extended through the area to connect with Deemer Road thereby providing additional access to the commercial district from the east. Use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles will be incorporated in the planned contract process.

AREA 6 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY

Area 7

This subarea of about 24 acres, extends approximately 789 feet east from Deemer Road to the City limits. East Bakerview Road forms the area's northern boundary. Its southern boundary is approximately 1,000 feet south of East Bakerview Road. Two single-family dwellings take access from East Bakerview Road and four take access from Deemer Road.

The terrain is generally flat. A tributary of Baker Creek passes through the southeastern portion of the area, and provides an important hydrological function. Deciduous and evergreen trees are prevalent along the creek bed; the remainder is cleared pastureland. As development occurs, the creek should be protected and retained in an open drainage status, and incorporated into the site design. Vegetative buffers should be maintained along the stream and the area's natural drainage channels.

Incorporation of performance criteria for cluster development found in the Bellingham Subdivision Ordinance should be required in order to increase the maximum number of units from four to seven units per acre. In addition, consolidation of lots should be required for increased density. Direct access from Deemer Road and East Bakerview Road should be discouraged. Access should be taken from internal, residential streets. Buffers should be provided along Deemer Road and East Bakerview Road separating this single-family area from the multi-family and commercial areas to the west.

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

Area 8

This area consists of the Bellis Fair shopping mall. Most of this 84-acre area was once a State Department of Natural Resources nursery site. It became private property in 1984 and in 1985 the City approved zoning for a regional mall. Bellis Fair opened in 1988. The mall contains over 750,000 square feet of gross leasable area, exceeding the minimum 700,000 square feet recommended at that time for a regional center.

The 1985 rezone was approved pursuant to the Concomitant Agreement and Amendment thereto filed under AF No. 1518797 and 1555668 together with Resolutions No. 34-86, 27-1987 and 30-1988. The terms of these agreements and resolutions continue in full force and effect unless otherwise amended by agreement of the authorized parties. Unless otherwise agreed by the authorized parties, none of the provisions of the Meridian Neighborhood Plan supersede or modify the terms of these agreements or resolutions. Nothing herein negates the City's authority to consider provisions of the Meridian Neighborhood Plan in negotiating any amendment of the agreements.

The enclosed shopping center and peripheral building pads are accessed by a ring road, Bellis Fair Parkway. This is a public street from its connection to Telegraph Road at Meridian Street to its intersection with Cordata Parkway on the north. The northern section of the loop from Cordata Parkway to Meridian Street is a private road. Improved transit facilities and service should be encouraged. Access to mall facilities should be directed to Bellis Fair Parkway and no street connections should allow mall traffic to traverse abutting residential zones.

There should be a 25-foot landscape buffer adjacent to all residential areas. The tree buffer along the western border of the site should be maintained. A landscaped or open space corridor including trees should also be maintained along the freeway. Use of retaining walls should be minimized; grade changes should be terraced and landscaped.

AREA 8 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 9

This area is approximately 40 acres and consists of several shopping areas including Meridian Village, SRO Center, Value Village, and Home Base shopping area. The SRO Center occupies the northwestern portion of the area. The Home Base shopping area encompasses an expansive area between Bellis Fair Parkway on the northern boundary of Area 9, to Meridian Village shopping center. Other uses in this shopping area include two large retail specialty stores.

Located east of Meridian Street and north of Telegraph Road, this area has two of Baker Creek's tributaries passing through the area's northwestern and southeastern corners. The stream in the southeastern area has been modified by commercial development. Meridian Village Shopping Center is in the southern half of this area. Appropriate land uses include retail shopping, banks, service stations, commercial recreation with apartments and offices as related uses.

Access should be from Telegraph Road with minimal access to Meridian Street. A landscaped planting area should be established on Meridian Street for any redesign of older centers. Remaining natural streams should be retained.

AREA 9 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 10

This area of approximately eight acres is located adjacent to Telegraph and Deemer Roads between the Meridian Village, Home Base shopping Center and Deemer Road. The terrain is generally flat with a gentle slope to the south. Much of the area has been cleared for development. In 1998, Home Depot constructed a major retail building adjacent to Telegraph and Deemer Roads with primary access on Telegraph Road. A second access from Deemer Road provides access to the rear portion of the lot and to the commercial area to the north. Improvement of Deemer and Telegraph Roads is required as development occurs.

Special consideration should be given to access (especially as it relates to the intersection of Deemer and Telegraph Roads), improvement of the Telegraph/Deemer intersection, internal circulation, drainage, open space, protection of Baker Creek tributary, buffers and incorporation of physical features adjacent to Baker Creek in site design. Allowed uses include all those listed in Whatcom County's General Commercial zoning District as of August 1996, and Bellingham Planned Commercial designation.

This area allows mixed residential/commercial buildings. See the Meridian Neighborhood zoning section (Area 10) of the Land Use and Development Code for details.

AREA 10 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 11

This subarea of approximately 12 acres is located on both sides of Telegraph Road extending from Deemer Road east to the City limits. The topography south of Telegraph Road is generally flat adjacent to Telegraph Road, with gentle rolling hills and pasturelands extending away from the roadway toward the interior portions of the parcels. A tributary of Baker Creek traverses the southwestern portion of the area. Four single-family dwellings are located adjacent to Telegraph Road, and one dwelling is located at the southern portion of the area taking access from Telegraph Road. The remainder is cleared pastureland.

The topography north of Telegraph Road is rolling hills. Baker Creek and associated wetlands extend generally through the central portion of this area in a wide ravine. Deciduous and evergreen trees are prevalent, and include alder, birch willows and cedar along the creek bed. As development occurs, significant trees adjacent to the creek should be preserved and incorporated into the open space landscaping pattern and site design. A vegetative buffer should be maintained and/or created along the stream and natural drainage channels. Three single-family dwellings are located adjacent to Telegraph Road.

Special consideration should be given to access, (especially as it relates to the intersection of Deemer and Telegraph Roads), improvement of the Telegraph/ Deemer intersection, internal circulation, drainage, open space, buffers and incorporation of natural features in site design. Use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles will be incorporated in the planned contract process.

AREA 11 LAND USE DESIGNATION: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL, MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY

Area 12

This area is approximately 31 acres generally located east of Meridian Street between Telegraph Road and Interstate-5. It contains Meridian Plaza shopping center, retail, offices, motel, mobile home park and mini-storage uses. Some vacant land remains in the eastern portion of the area. At the east end of the area a rise effectively buffers much of the north part from the freeway. A major tributary of Baker Creek traverses the area and forms a natural open space. Because of its significant flooding potential in this area, the creek should be retained in an open state. It also provides a natural open space buffer along the freeway and between developments. Vegetation buffers should be retained along the creek and established along the edge of the area facing the freeway.

Appropriate uses are highway oriented, and include such uses as restaurants associated with motels, banks, and small retail development, offices, and services. Prohibited uses are listed in the Design Guidelines section.

Primary access to Meridian Plaza is from Telegraph Road with secondary access from McLeod Road. There should be only one main sign for this center located at the main entrance to the plaza. Meridian Place and a portion of a motel site are located east of Meridian Plaza and have access from Telegraph Road and McLeod Road. Baker Creek mobile home park is currently located in the central portion of the area. A mini-storage farther to the east takes access from McLeod Road. Freeway signage in this vicinity should not be located within 200 feet of residential property.

Two single-family residences are also within the area adjacent to McLeod Road. The remainder is cleared pastureland. With new development, primary access in the east portion of the area should be from the west along McLeod Road. All of the lots located south of McLeod Road as it parallels I-5 presently under one ownership shall be legally bound together as one parcel. No division of this parcel shall be permitted unless approved by the City in conjunction with a planned development contract, consistent with the provisions of this section.

AREAS 12 LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 12A

This subarea of approximately 3.73 acres is located adjacent to Telegraph Road on the south. The terrain is relatively flat along Telegraph Road with rolling hills sloping to the south. Currently one single family residence and associated uses are located in the area. When commercial development occurs, improvements to Telegraph Road will be required. Issues to be addressed as the area develops include vehicular access and internal circulation, improvement of the intersection at Deemer and Telegraph Roads, drainage, buffers separating commercial uses from residential development, and site design. Allowed uses include all those listed in Whatcom County General Commercial zoning District as of August 1996, and Bellingham Planned Commercial designation. Residential units and mixed-use buildings are encouraged. See the Meridian Neighborhood zoning table in the Land Use and Development Code for details.

AREA 12A LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

Area 12B

This subarea of approximately 7 acres is located between McLeod Road and a line approximately 540 feet north of McLeod Road, extending easterly from Lot C, Bengen Short Plat generally to the east property line of Lot 6 of the Baker Garden Tracts to

Bellingham. The topography slopes from the north to the south, and is relatively flat adjacent to McLeod Road. Baker Creek tributary traverses the southern portion of the area, and serves an important hydrological function, as well as providing an opportunity for a lineal greenbelt open space system through the area. Most of the area is pastureland. Area wetlands are associated with Baker Creek. As development occurs, consideration should be given to protection of Baker Creek and incorporation of the creek and wetlands in site design. Vegetative buffers should be provided between commercial development and residential development east of the McLeod barricade. Access to this area is from the west along McLeod Road.

This subarea forms a transition to the residential properties east of the barricade along McLeod Road. Site planning should incorporate natural topographic features, vegetation, wetland and stream areas, and pedestrian trails or walkways, and buffers separating commercial development from residential development east of the McLeod Barricade.

Residential units are encouraged in this commercially zoned area. See the Meridian Neighborhood zoning table (Area 12B) in the Land Use and Development Code for details.

AREA 12B LAND USE DESIGNATION: COMMERCIAL

As adopted by Ordinance No. 8868 and amended by Ordinances 8946, 9271, 9327, 9442, 9446, 9491, 9511, 9524, 9559, 9601, 9638, 9652, 9689, 9820, 9874, 9879, 9886, 9901, 9995, 10380, 10391, 10490, 10585, 10616, 10665, 10756, 10779B, 10851, 10856, 1998-12-094, 2002-01-007 and 2004-12-087.