

2/08/06 DRAFT WATERFRONT ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATION

NEW WHATCOM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES INTEGRATED WITH WATERFRONT FUTURES GROUP GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CITY CENTER

I. Reinforce the Inherent Qualities of Each Place on the Waterfront

1. Make the waterfront a regular part of the lives of more people.
 - . Foster a greater sense of ownership and stewardship for the health of the Bay and its shore lands by providing places for people to live, work, learn and play as a regular part of their daily activities
 - . Create physical and cultural conditions that are welcoming to visitors and encourage their participation in waterfront places and activities

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Establish signature design elements, a memorable park system, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle routes, and public amenities which set the New Whatcom area apart from other urban waterfront areas.
 - B. Redevelop the New Whatcom site with a mix of uses including jobs, housing, retail development , services, educational and cultural facilities and water-dependant industrial uses.
 - C. Community interests will remain a priority throughout the development of New Whatcom. Public input will be actively sought and considered throughout the life of the project.
2. Respect history, cultures and the arts.
 - . Embrace, include and expand knowledge of our peoples and their cultural heritage

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Work with Lummi and Nooksack leaders to facilitate their development of cultural and educational facilities which feature Native American culture and history.
 - B. Identify and preserve artifacts on the Georgia Pacific site, including equipment and storage tanks which have historic or aesthetic value, and utilize them as displays or art at community gathering points in the redevelopment project. Develop interpretive signs and information about the historical uses of the site.
3. Make the waterfront inviting to people on foot.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Develop a network of interconnected pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities

within the site with connections to adjacent neighborhoods and parks.

- B. Design the living, working and shopping areas with a pedestrian scale, which is not dominated by vehicles.

4. Reinforce a unique “sense of place” at different waterfront locations.

- Support development of a vibrant area that integrates water-dependent uses with new commercial, institutional, educational, and residential uses and public spaces

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Establish unique urban waterfront design guidelines to encourage contemporary architecture and leading green building techniques that blend with the historic industrial buildings on the GP site and highlight the maritime flavor and cultural heritage of the Bellingham waterfront.

- B. Design a building scale and business atmosphere which encourages unique, locally owned businesses.

5. Complement adjacent uses.

- Create an urban mixed-use neighborhood that will complement downtown

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Divide the New Whatcom redevelopment area into a number of districts with distinct character and function, developed in phases to correspond with market demand.

- B. Encourage a mix of uses which complement, rather than duplicate, businesses in the Central Business District and provide family-wage jobs, including offices, research and development, business incubators, live-work studios, and water-related industries.

II. Restore the Health of Land & Water

1. Enhance or reintroduce natural systems.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Continue to work with State and Federal and local agencies, organizations, institutions, including the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe to be good stewards of the environment. Identify opportunities for cooperative projects and joint funding for shoreline restoration, habitat enhancement, environmental remediation and public access improvements.

2. Create and restore habitat wherever possible.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Evaluate sites identified in the Waterfront Futures Group “Opportunities and Ideas for Habitat Restoration and Water Access on Urban Bellingham Bay” and other plans and studies for designation as public access and shoreline restoration sites in the New Whatcom Master Plan and City of Bellingham Shoreline Master Program update.
 - B. Urban development and the protection of waterfront environments need not be mutually exclusive. Strike a balance between the economic vitality of Bellingham’s waterfront, the health of its natural resources and enhancement of the community’s livability through its connection to the water.
3. Remediate upland and in-water contamination.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Work with the Department of Ecology to complete Remedial Investigation Feasibility Studies for contaminated sites within the New Whatcom Master Plan study area and implement adopted strategies.
4. Protect existing natural shorelines.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Designate the natural shoreline areas at the head of the I&J waterway, the foot of Cornwall, and adjacent to the log pond for preservation and enhancement as habitat and public access points.
5. Seek opportunities to soften existing hardened shorelines.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Explore opportunities to rehabilitate and enhance hardened shoreline along the Whatcom Waterway, ASB lagoon and other shores for improved habitat and public access.
6. Tailor environmental cleanup strategies and remediation to planned use.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Coordinate timing and recommendations in the New Whatcom Master Plan and EIS, Whatcom Waterway Remedial Investigation Feasibility Study, and the Bellingham Shoreline Master Program to ensure that environmental cleanup strategies are consistent with proposed uses and development standards.
7. Manage stormwater to enhance estuarine habitats.

- Treated or otherwise, assure the quality of stormwater used to enhance estuarine habitats.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Where feasible, use bioswales, rain gardens and other appropriate low impact development techniques to treat storm water.
8. Require sustainable practices in all development.
- Avoid “heat island” effect by utilizing high reflective roofing materials and vegetated roof systems
 - Make use of on-site renewable energy such as solar and daylighting, to satisfy the building’s energy needs
 - Incorporate Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) intentions and requirements in design and construction of new structures

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Utilize appropriate site design standards, such as Whatcom County Building Industry of Washington “Green Community” program or Leadership in Environmental Education and Design (LEED)TM Neighborhood Development standards and encourage new or remodeled buildings to be BuiltGreenTM or LEEDTM certified.
- B. Continue work with NOAA to develop a “Clean Ocean Marina” standard which incorporates environmental remediation, habitat enhancement, pollution prevention practices and public access, and apply these standards to the proposed New Whatcom Marina.

9. Restore, enhance and expand beaches wherever possible. (See II. 3 & 4)
10. Connect proposed open space and natural areas to regional open space network and natural wildlife corridors. (See III. 1 & 2)
11. Explore mitigation banking and incentives (such as environmental credits) for environmental resource protection and enhancement prior to redevelopment.

III. Improve Waterfront Access

1. Develop strong connections between uplands and water.
- Utilize existing streets to make pedestrian and vehicle connections to and from adjacent districts and neighborhoods.
 - Identify areas where pedestrian access is provided when not in use for commercial/industrial purposes
 - Provide transient moorage with easy access from water to upland services.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Dissolve the barriers that separate the waterfront from the Bellingham Central Business District, connecting the City with the Bay.

- B. Develop strong vehicular and pedestrian connections between New Whatcom, E. Holly Street, Roeder Street and State Street, while acknowledging and creatively working the obstacles of topography and the railroad. If there is a WWU presence on the New Whatcom site, develop a connection to the WWU campus.
- C. Improve access to New Whatcom from I-5 through a combination of road improvements and signage, commensurate with demonstrated need. Limit the impacts of additional traffic through adjacent neighborhoods and commercial areas.

2. Provide link to regional trail systems.

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Develop an interconnected system of waterfront access and view points, public parks, open spaces, pedestrian walkways and bicycle routes which will be the back-bone of the New Whatcom redevelopment project.

3. Provide multiple modes of access to each area of the waterfront.

- . Create and establish circulation routes
- . Preserve transportation corridor on railroad right-of-way
- . Cluster shared parking away from the water

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies:

- A. Make the majority of water's edge accessible via non-motorized means of transportation, including pedestrian walkways, bicycle trails, motorized and non-motorized boat access, and transient moorage, connected to a network of parks, trails and transit connections. Restrict or control public access to areas used for water-dependant industry, sensitive habitat or government agency uses where public access would conflict with public health or safety, habitat protection or national security.
- B. Encourage non-motorized transportation by creating a "park once" environment that makes it safe and attractive for pedestrians or bicycles to connect to amenities, goods and services, jobs and housing. Provide covered transit stops, pedestrian facilities and bicycle parking areas to support non-motorized travel.
- C. Parking should be thought of as infrastructure and must be convenient, ample, efficient and affordable, and facilitated or managed by a local jurisdiction.
- D. Generally, parking should be located under buildings and in parking structures located away from the shoreline, unless associated with a water-oriented use. Subject to the Master Plan design and phasing, surface

parking may be developed as an interim use on areas planned for future redevelopment, enabling its evolution over time into a denser environment.

4. Provide convenient connections between different modes of transportation (jitney/bus).

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies

- A. Encourage frequent, convenient and well designed transit service as well as sufficient density to support it.
5. Create and connect large and small parks and open spaces with a “braided” system of pedestrian trails.
 - . Create water-oriented parks and open spaces
 - . Connect parks and open spaces with walkways and bikeways through the City Center neighborhood

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies

- A. Develop the Whatcom Waterway and its adjacent waterfront access as a community amenity, extending the Maritime Heritage Park to the Bay.
- B. Connect the New Whatcom open space and trail network to Boulevard Park with an over water trail from the south end of the Cornwall Landfill to Boulevard Park.
6. Enhance opportunities for visual access to waterfront areas.
 - . Preserve, improve and create public views to and from the waterfront

New Whatcom Implementation Strategies

- A. Identify important view corridors and align streets or limit building height to preserve water views from street ends and other key public view points.
7. Provide the opportunity to walk the waterfront while respecting natural habitat.
 - . Provide viewing that respects industrial activity areas
8. Help people find their way.
9. Provide way finding for the Coast Millennium Trail as a route that follows existing and proposed trails.
10. Explore the concept of public access “banking” and other financing incentives for improving public access.
11. Protect and enhance shoreline environmental resources when designing for shoreline access and upland development.

IV. Promote a Healthy & Dynamic Waterfront Economy

1. Create new mixed-use areas on the waterfront for commercial, industrial, educational, recreational and residential uses.
 - . Encourage reuse and renovation of existing buildings
 - . Identify, preserve and locate sites for water-dependent uses
 - . Complement existing downtown area with waterfront redevelopment
 - . Support water-dependent activities and uses
 - . Retain deep water moorage and entitlement

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

- A. Redevelop the Central Waterfront as a synergistic mixed-use development.
 - B. Maintain a balance between jobs, housing, retail development and services developed on the New Whatcom site. Develop a phasing plan which establishes a ratio between retail, services, offices or institutional uses, and residential development on the site.
 - C. Encourage the development of businesses which provide goods and services to residents of the site and surrounding neighborhoods, local businesses and employees, and visitors to attractions on the site. Develop size and design criteria which discourage "big box" stores which draw the majority of their customers from other areas of the City.
 - D. Work with non-profit organizations and private developers to provide incentives for development of a mix of housing types affordable to the employees of the businesses provided on the site.
 - E. Include sites for water-related industry and services to support commercial fishing, recreational boating and maritime industries, including boat building and repair to preserve the nautical history of our community.
2. Support water-dependent activities and uses.

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

- A. Identify appropriate locations for water-dependant industrial uses and develop appropriate design features and transitional areas to buffer uses which produce noise, glare or odors from incompatible uses where needed.
3. Create conditions attractive to jobs of the future.
 - . Create a vision for desired businesses and educational facilities

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

- A. Capitalize on the synergistic relationship between New Whatcom and adjacent commercial districts by enhancing rather than competing with adjacent areas especially the Central Business District. This can be achieved by an early emphasis on jobs, residential units and other activities which support businesses in the adjacent areas.
 - B. Coordinate New Whatcom redevelopment with plans and development activities in adjacent areas, and be conscious of impact to adjacent neighborhoods.
 - C. Work with universities, agencies, organizations and business groups involved in education, art and culture to attract educational and cultural facilities to the waterfront.
4. Strengthen the tie between local jobs and resources.
- . Encourage and promote fisheries and ocean-related research industries and facilities
 - . Encourage a range of development and businesses that foster apprenticeships and other educational and training opportunities

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

- A. Form strategic partnerships with State, Federal and local agencies organizations, institutions, private investors, developers and businesses to attract redevelopment capital and jobs to New Whatcom.
 - Work with non-profit organizations and provide a combination of incentives, mandates, and subsidies for private developers to develop a mix of housing types affordable to employees of the jobs provided nearby.
5. Provide public amenities and infrastructure to support redevelopment.

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

- A. Make responsible economic decisions throughout the life of the project by:
 - Balancing the pace and amount of public money spent on infrastructure, parks and public services provided for the site with the increased tax revenues generated from new development and related commercial activity and property value increases on adjacent properties.
 - Generating financial return on the sale or lease of land not needed for public or port related activities to recover money spent on environmental remediation, habitat restoration and public amenities.
 - Providing public open space improvements which increase the economic value of adjacent property.

6. Improve permitting processes to achieve the goals and principles of the Waterfront Vision.

- . Promote a “business incubator” model with access to development resources
- . Create flexible zoning in the City Center

New Whatcom Redevelopment Strategies

A. Work cooperatively with the City of Bellingham to complete and adopt a master plan for the new Whatcom area, which includes the zoning, development regulations and infrastructure plans for the area.

B. Phase site development consistent with anticipated absorption rates.

C. Implement land uses that acknowledge Bellingham’s deep maritime and cultural history.

7. Explore economic spin-off related to Bellingham Bay Pilot cleanup strategies.

8. Provide incentives and credits for “green” buildings. (See II. 8)