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**ATTACHMENT 1**

**Proposal  
Urban Village Design Guidelines and Standards  
Draft Amendments**

**20.25 Design Review**

**20.25.010 - Purpose**

The purpose of this chapter is to establish an administrative design review process that will implement design standards and guidelines adopted for various districts and types of development as specified herein.

**20.25.020 - Applicability**

The following areas and developments are subject to design review under this chapter. No building or sign permit shall be issued for projects regulated under this chapter until design review approval has been issued. The provisions of Chapter 20.14 regarding nonconformance establish which of the standards and criteria in this chapter apply to developed sites. In addition, some standards in this chapter specify the level of development that requires full compliance.

**A. Multi-Family Residential Projects.** The following developments shall obtain design review approval when located in any use district except within the City Center Design Review District, Institutional General Use Types that are governed by an adopted institutional master plan, ~~or the Fairhaven Design Review District~~ or in an Urban Village Design District:

1. New construction consisting of or resulting in:
  - a. Single family attached residential development consisting of 3 or more attached units;
  - b. Residential development consisting of 3 or more dwelling units on a site;
  - c. Accessory buildings for any of the developments listed above.
2. Any additions or exterior alterations to buildings of the types listed in paragraph 20.25.020 A.1 and/or to their associated site improvements, if the proposed construction requires a building permit. The design standards apply only to the proposed additions or alterations to the extent feasible while allowing the flexibility to accommodate the design of the existing improvements.
3. The requirements of this chapter apply to any of the residential uses listed in Section 20.25.020 A. when part of a commercial or mixed use development. In these situations the Director shall determine which requirement statements are applicable and which portions of the development are subject to review based on the context of the use district and the type of development proposed.

1  
2 4. The following activities are exempt:  
3  
4 a. Interior alterations that do not affect the exterior design of the building.

5  
6 b. Development that does not conform to the design standards and is  
7 damaged or destroyed by sudden accidental cause may be reconstructed. The  
8 reconstructed improvement may not be more nonconforming than it was  
9 immediately prior to the damage. An application for a building permit to rebuild  
10 or repair the nonconforming improvement must be made within 12 months or the  
11 nonconformance shall be considered to be terminated and shall not be resumed.  
12 Development that does not conform to other provisions of Title 20 shall continue  
13 to be regulated under the provisions of Chapter 20.14.

14  
15 c. Normal maintenance and repair.

16  
17 **B. Development in the Fairhaven Design Review District.** Developments of the type  
18 listed in Section 20.26.030 and located within the Fairhaven Design Review District as defined  
19 by Section 20.26.020 and shall obtain design review approval.

20  
21 **C. Development in the City Center Design Review District and Urban Village Districts.**  
22 All development projects requiring a building permit within the City Center Design Review  
23 District (Figure 25-1) or an Urban Village Design District shall obtain design review approval  
24 unless exempted by this subsection.

25  
26 1. The following projects shall be exempt:

27  
28 a. Single family detached dwelling units, signs, interior work which does not  
29 alter the exterior of the structure, normal maintenance and repair and minor  
30 renovations or additions which the Director determines do not affect the  
31 architectural character of the building; and

32  
33 b. City of Bellingham and Bellingham-Whatcom Public Facilities District  
34 projects that are in an advanced stage of design development and make  
35 application for building or construction permits within 180 days of the effective  
36 date of this ordinance.

37  
38 2. The following projects shall be reviewed either by staff, the Design Review Board  
39 or the Historic Preservation Commission as noted. The Design Review Board and the  
40 Historic Preservation Commission shall provide a recommendation to the Director  
41 regarding a design review decision. The Director shall give substantial weight to the  
42 recommendation of the Design Review Board and the Historic Preservation  
43 Commission.

44  
45 a. Projects subject to review by the Design Review Board:

46  
47 i. New buildings and developments, and

48  
49 ii. Additions or exterior alterations with a valuation of over \$50,000  
50 unless the building is on the City of Bellingham, State or National  
51 registers of historic places.

1  
2           b.     Projects subject to review by the Historic Preservation Commission:  
3

4                   i.     Alterations and exterior additions to buildings on the City of  
5                   Bellingham, State or National registers of historic places if the alteration  
6                   or addition has a valuation of over \$50,000. If a Certificate of Alteration is  
7                   required under BMC 17.90.060, the Commission's decision regarding the  
8                   Certificate of Alteration shall be incorporated into the design review  
9                   decision by the Director.

10  
11           c.     Projects subject to staff review:  
12

13                   i.     All projects requiring design review under this subsection other  
14                   than those requiring under BMC 20.25.020.C.2.a. and b. The Director  
15                   may refer any project subject to staff review to the Design Review Board  
16                   for recommendation if staff has identified potential inconsistencies with  
17                   the design standards.  
18

19 **D.     Mixed Uses in Residential-Multi Zones.** Uses allows as a "mixed use" by the Use  
20 Qualifier in Residential-Multi zones shall obtain design review approval if the project involves the  
21 following:  
22

23           1.     Construction of a building, or  
24

25           2.     Any additions or exterior alterations to buildings and/or to their associated site  
26           improvements, if the proposed construction requires a building permit. They should be  
27           applied to the extent feasible while accommodating the design of the existing  
28           improvements.  
29

30 **E.     Large Retail Establishments.**  
31

32           1.     All new construction or exterior alterations for a large retail establishment as  
33           defined in subsection E.2., below shall obtain design review approval unless exempted  
34           by this subsection.  
35

36           2.     A "large retail establishment" means an individual retail user that exceeds 60,000  
37           square feet of gross floor area, including but not limited to membership warehouse  
38           clubs, discount stores, specialized product stores and department stores.  
39

40           For the purpose of this definition, gross floor area shall consist of the sum of the gross  
41           horizontal areas of all floors within the inside perimeter of the exterior walls of the  
42           structure or tenant space and roofed or partially walled outdoor areas reserved for the  
43           display, storage, or sale of merchandise, including accessory uses inside the primary  
44           retail establishment. Structured parking is excluded. The gross floor area of adjacent  
45           stores shall be aggregated in cases where the stores (1) are engaged in the selling of  
46           similar or related merchandise and operate under common ownership or management;  
47           (2) share check stands, a warehouse, or a distribution facility; or (3) otherwise operate  
48           as associated, integrated or cooperative business enterprises.  
49

50           3.     Activities that do not require a building permit, interior work which does not alter  
51           the exterior of the structure, normal maintenance and repair and minor renovations or

1 additions which the Director determines do not affect the architectural character of the  
2 building shall be exempt.  
3  
4

5 **20.25.030 - Procedure**  
6

7 **A.** Design review applications shall follow the procedures in BMC 21.10 and the following:  
8

9 **1. Design Review Board.** For projects requiring review by the Design Review  
10 Board, the following procedures shall apply:  
11

12 **a. Pre-Application Design Guidance Meeting.** The applicant shall apply  
13 for a pre-application meeting with Design Review Board. The applicant shall  
14 provide conceptual level information regarding the proposed project, including  
15 any potential concept alternatives. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss  
16 which design standards are applicable; how the design standards, guidelines and  
17 regulations apply to the proposed project and provide guidance on information  
18 that should be provided with the design review application.  
19

20 The Director may waive the pre-application meeting for complete design review  
21 applications received within 90 days of the effective date of this ordinance in  
22 order to facilitate design review projects already in advanced stages of design  
23 development on the effective date of this ordinance.  
24

25 **b. Design Response Meeting.** Within 60 days after a complete design  
26 review application has been submitted, the application shall be scheduled for  
27 review by the Design Review Board at a public meeting. Notice of the meeting  
28 shall be mailed as provided in BMC 21.10.200 D. and shall also be published in a  
29 newspaper of general circulation at least 10 days prior to the meeting date. The  
30 applicant shall provide an analysis of the project's consistency with the design  
31 criteria. Staff shall provide a report responding to the applicant's analysis. Public  
32 comment relevant to the application of the design criteria shall be considered, but  
33 the Board may restrict the time allotted for comment in order to complete their  
34 meeting agenda. The DRB shall review the plans for consistency with the  
35 applicable design guidelines, standards and regulations and forward a  
36 recommendation to the Director by motion. The Board may recommend  
37 conditions of approval. If the Board does not recommend approval, the Board  
38 shall specify which criteria were not satisfied and the elements of the project that  
39 were not in compliance.  
40

41 **B. Historic Preservation Commission.** For projects requiring review by the Historic  
42 Preservation Commission, a pre-application design guidance meeting as described in Section  
43 BMC 20.25.030 A.1.a. shall be conducted at the applicant's option. Review by the Commission  
44 shall be conducted in the same manner as the design response meeting in Section BMC  
45 20.25.030 A.1.b. provided the timeline for scheduling the meeting may be extended for projects  
46 requiring a Certificate of Alteration under BMC 17.90 to allow consolidation of the reviews.  
47

48 **C.** No building permits shall be issued until design approval has been obtained. Building  
49 and other construction permits shall be consistent with the design review approval. Minor  
50 adjustments may be made after review and approval by the Director. Adjustments shall be

1 limited to minor changes in the dimensions or siting of improvements or to design details that do  
2 not change the scope or character of the proposal.

3  
4 **20.25.040 - Decision Criteria**

5  
6 **A.** For projects listed in Section 20.25.020 A. and Section 20.25.020 D., the Director shall  
7 base his or her decision on consistency with the provisions of the adopted Multi-Family  
8 Residential Design Handbook.

9  
10 **B.** For projects listed in Section 20.25.020 B., the Fairhaven Design Review District, the  
11 Director shall base his or her decision on consistency with the standards in Chapter 20.26.

12  
13 **C.** For projects listed in Section 20.25.020 C., City Center Design Review District, the  
14 Director shall base his or her decision on consistency with the standards in the City Center  
15 Design Standards as contained in Exhibit A and the applicable design regulations contained in  
16 BMC 20.25.050. If the project is located in a Residential General Use Type, the standards of  
17 the Multi-Family Residential Design Handbook shall also apply. If there is any conflict between  
18 these standards, the Design Review Board and/or Director shall apply the standard that would  
19 result in the best design, based on the context of the area in which the project is located and the  
20 policies in the applicable neighborhood plan. If there is any conflict between these standards  
21 and the standards in BMC 17.90, Historic Preservation, the historic preservation standards shall  
22 prevail.

23  
24 **D.** For projects listed in Section 20.25.020.E., Large Retail Establishments, the Director  
25 shall base his or her decision on consistency with the standards in Section 20.25.060 unless the  
26 proposal is located in the City Center Design Review District or the Fairhaven Design Review  
27 District, in which case the standards of those districts shall apply.

28  
29 **E.** For projects listed in Section 20.25.020.C., Urban Village Design Districts, the Director  
30 shall base his or her decision on consistency with the Urban Village Design guidelines and  
31 standards in Section 20.25.070. Large retail establishments shall also comply with the  
32 standards in Section 20.25.020.E.

33  
34  
35 **20.25.050 - City Center Design**

36  
37 [No change.]

38  
39 **20.25.060 – Large Retail Facility Design**

40  
41 [No change.]

42  
43 **20.25.070 – Urban Village Design**

44  
45 **A. Departures from design requirements.** The Director may approve departures from  
46 the design guidelines and standards. All requests for departures shall be identified in the  
47 application and reviewed by the Design Review Board following the process in BMC  
48 20.25.030.A.1.b. unless the request involves a building on the City, State or National register of  
49 historic places, in which case it shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. A  
50 departure may only be allowed if the Director determines that the applicant has demonstrated  
51 that either:

1  
2 1. In response to difficult physical circumstances relating to the size, shape,  
3 topography, location or surroundings of the subject property, an alternative solution is  
4 required that meets the intent of the requirement to the greatest extent practical, or

5  
6 2. An alternative design will provide an equal or better solution that:

7  
8 a. Meets the intent of the standard;

9  
10 b. Enhances the character and livability of the urban village;

11  
12 c. Enhances the character and environment for pedestrians;

13  
14 d. Enhances or protects the character of the neighborhood or vicinity by  
15 protecting natural features, historic sites, open space, or other resources; and

16  
17 e. Will not have any substantial detrimental effect on nearby properties and  
18 the City or the neighborhood.

19  
20 **B. Specific Standards**

21  
22 **1. Site Design**

23  
24 **a. Orientation to Street**

25  
26 **i. Intent: Reinforce pedestrian activity, orientation to ground floor activities and**  
27 **enhance the liveliness of the street through building location.**

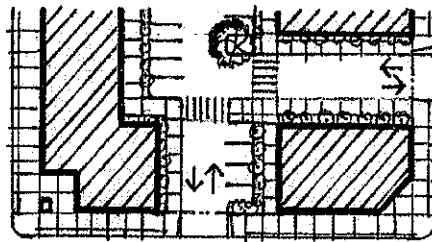
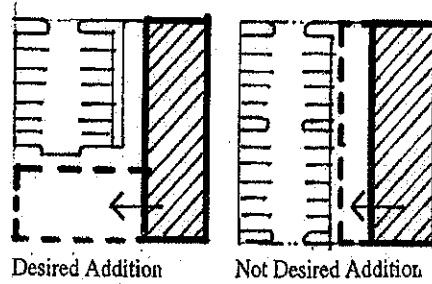
28  
29 **ii. Guideline: Locate the building at sidewalk edge. A larger setback may be**  
30 **considered in order to accommodate a wider sidewalk, public space, or outdoor**  
31 **café.**

32  
33 **iii. Guideline: Locate the primary entrance at street level facing a public street.**  
34 **The primary entrance should be more articulated and highlighted (size, material,**  
35 **recessed, lighting) than secondary entrances.**

36  
37  
38 **b. Surface Parking**

39  
40 **i. Intent: Ensure parking lots are not a dominant element within urban villages and**  
41 **to minimize the impact of surface parking on the pedestrian environment.**

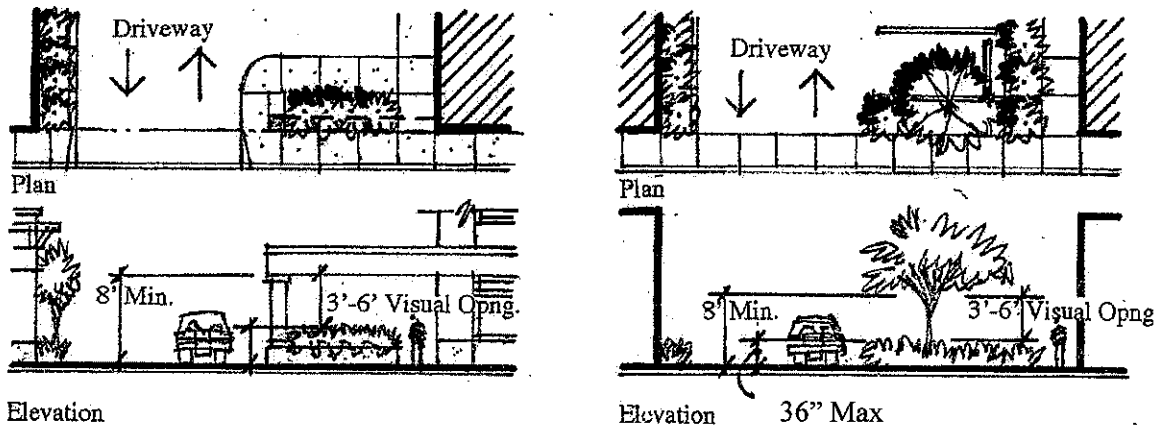
42  
43 **ii. Standard: Parking shall be located to the rear or side of a building and shall not**  
44 **be located at intersections. (See Figure 25.7)**



Surface Parking  
Figure 25.7

**iii. Standards:**

- (1) A wall or evergreen hedge designed to be maintained at a height of at least 2.5 feet and not more than 3.5 feet is required along the street frontage of any street level open parking lot. Open trellis work or similar features that can be seen through may extend above the wall. Street trees with canopies above pedestrian height may be included. Planting beds must be at least 5' wide. (See Figure 25.8)

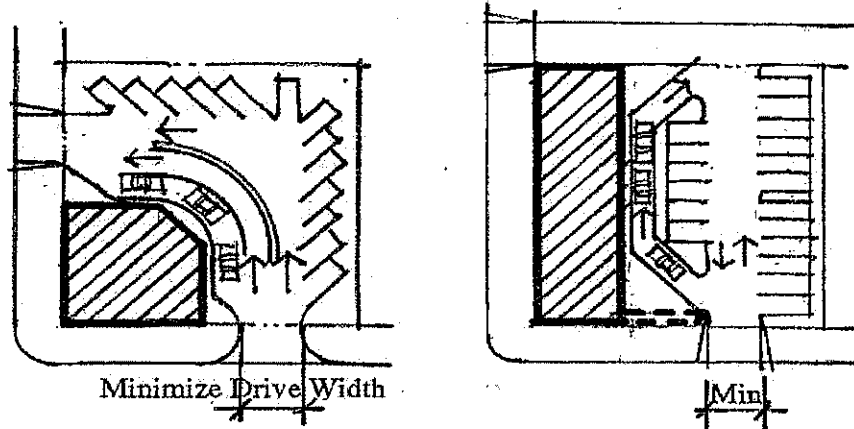


Surface Parking  
Figure 25.8

- (2) Visually screen parking lots from abutting Residential Single zones and Residential Transition Areas. Chain link fencing with slats is not an acceptable screen.

1 **c. Drive-Through Facilities**

- 2
- 3 **i. Intent: Diminish the impact of automobiles on the pedestrian environment.**
- 4
- 5 **ii. Standard: Access and stacking lanes for drive-through services shall not be**
- 6 **located between the street and the building or between the building and a**
- 7 **residential zone. (See Figure 25.9)**
- 8



26 **Drive Through Facilities**

27 **Figure 25.9**

28 **d. Refuse Enclosures**

- 29
- 30 **i. Intent: Reduce the impact and view of trash and recycling storage areas.**
- 31
- 32 **ii. Guideline: Locate refuse storage to the rear of the site and away from major**
- 33 **pedestrian walkways .**
- 34 **iii. Standard: Refuse containment areas shall be placed in a building or enclosed in**
- 35 **a structure that is of similar architectural character of the major structures on the**
- 36 **site.**

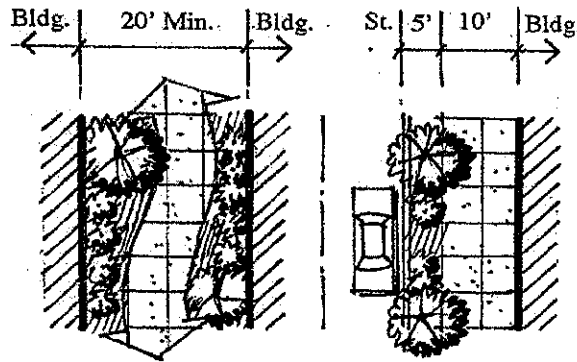
37 **e. Rooftop Screening**

- 38
- 39 **i. Intent: Mechanical equipment should not detract from the appearance of the**
- 40 **building.**
- 41
- 42 **ii. Standard: Screen mechanical equipment by extending the parapet walls or**
- 43 **other roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building to a**
- 44 **height that equals or exceeds the height of the mechanical equipment.**
- 45
- 46

47 **f. Pedestrian Connectivity**

- 48
- 49 **i. Intent: Create a network of safe, convenient and attractive off-street linkages for**
- 50 **pedestrians.**

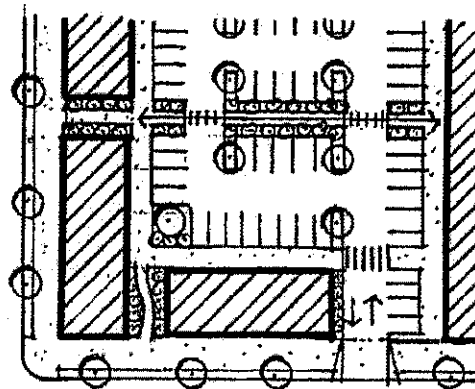
- 1  
2  
3 **ii. Guideline:** When a development encompasses a site greater than 350 feet wide  
4 or deep, incorporate pedestrian access through the site to connect to alleys,  
5 streets or neighboring properties. (See Figure 25.10)



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17  
18 **Pedestrian Connectivity**

19 **Figure 25.10**

- 20  
21  
22 **iii. Guideline:** Provide walkways connecting access points within the site and from  
23 the site to the street. Locate walkways in active areas visible from adjoining  
24 spaces. (See Figure 25.11)



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37  
38 **Pedestrian Connectivity**

39 **Figure 25.11**

- 40  
41  
42 **iv. Standard:** Pedestrian through-block connections shall not be less than 5 feet  
43 wide and be clearly defined by use of material, elevation (6" raised) or  
44 landscaping borders.
- 45  
46 **v. Standard:** Pedestrian access that is separated from vehicle access shall be  
47 provided between the building main entry and the public sidewalk. If walkways  
48 cross parking driveways, the walkway shall be separated from parking by  
49 landscaping or by raised pavement, or when crossing driving lanes, by a change  
50 in texture or material.

1  
2 **g. Variations on Building Design**  
3

- 4 **i. Intent:** Create a range of different forms and designs so repetition and  
5 monotony are avoided.  
6  
7 **ii. Guideline:** When a development includes three or more buildings, the buildings  
8 within a development should not use identical footprints or elevations. Changes  
9 in textures and colors may be appropriate. While there may be some elements  
10 that provide a commonality to the entire development, variety shall be visually  
11 evident.  
12

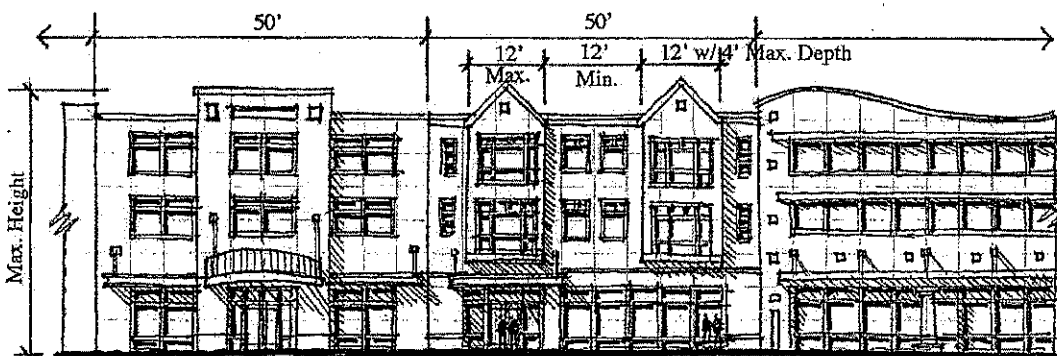
13 **h. Site Lighting**  
14

- 15 **i. Intent:** Provide architectural character, safety and encourage evening activity  
16 while minimizing impacts to neighboring properties and the darkness of the night  
17 sky.  
18  
19 **ii. Guideline:** Low intensity lighting should be provided for entries, walkways,  
20 parking garage entrances, parking lots, alleys and refuse enclosures.  
21  
22 **iii. Guideline:** Parking lot lights should generally be no more than 18 feet in height  
23 and lower for pedestrian walkways.  
24  
25 **iv. Guideline:** Lighting should be directed away from the sky, dwellings and  
26 neighboring development. The use of LED or low energy use fixtures is strongly  
27 encouraged.  
28  
29 **v. Guideline:** Light fixtures should contribute to the overall design of the building  
30 and may be used to highlight special architectural features.  
31

32 **2. Building Design**  
33

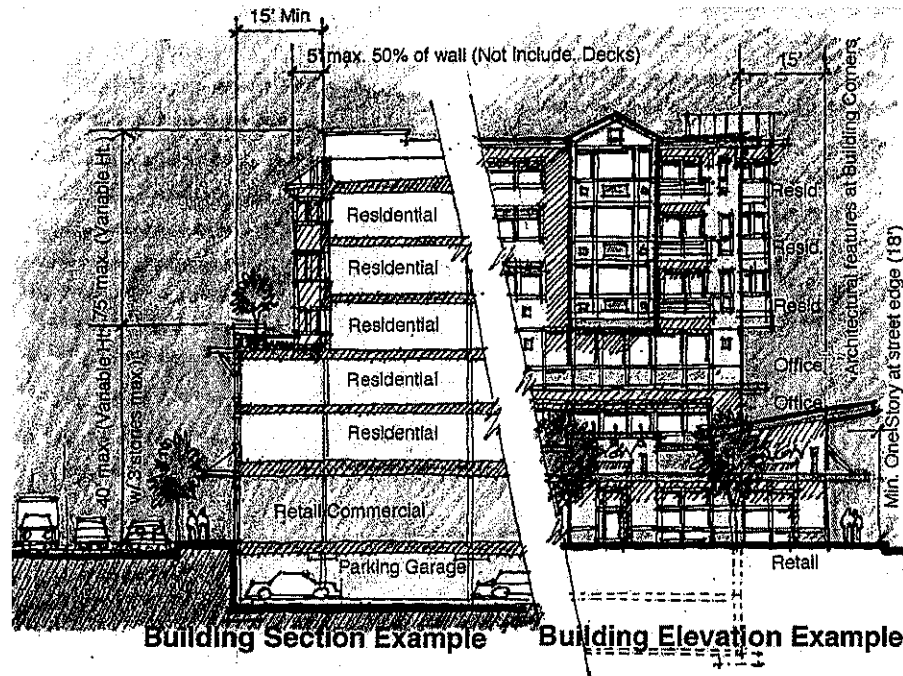
34 **a. Massing and Articulation**  
35

- 36 **i. Intent:** Reduce the apparent mass of large buildings to provide visual interest  
37 and pedestrian scale. (See Figure 25.12, which applies to guidelines ii.-v below.)  
38



Massing & Articulation Figure 25.12

- 1        **ii. Guideline:** Buildings should convey a visually distinct base and top.
- 2
- 3        **iii. Guideline:** Avoid long, uninterrupted expanses of walls, vertically and
- 4        horizontally.
- 5
- 6        **iv. Guideline:** Roof parapets and eaves are encouraged to vary in height to avoid
- 7        long, straight lines at the maximum building heights.
- 8
- 9        **v. Guideline:** Buildings with facades longer than 50 feet should be divided into
- 10       "modules" that are expressed three dimensionally throughout the building façade.
- 11
- 12       **vi. Guideline:** Reduce the apparent mass of buildings facing adjacent public
- 13       spaces, historic register sites or residential zones by stepping down building
- 14       height and reducing the area of wall planes.
- 15
- 16       **vii. Standards:**
- 17
- 18       **(1)** The maximum height within 15' of any street right-of-way is 3 stories and
- 19       40 feet. The minimum height within 15' of any street right-of-way is 18
- 20       feet. A maximum of 50% of wall length above the 3rd story may encroach
- 21       5' into the setback (not including decks). (See Figure 25.13)



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43        **Massing & Articulation**

44        Figure 25.13

- 45
- 46        **(2)** Provide at least one set back for every 3 stories in similar fashion to
- 47        b.(1). on building elevations that front public spaces and historic buildings
- 48        on the City, State or National Historic Registers. This provision shall
- 49        apply regardless of whether the proposed development is built up to, or
- 50        set back from, the common property line.

3-15



1 **d. Building Material**

- 2
- 3 **i. Intent:** Create vibrant urban villages through the use of high quality materials.
- 4
- 5 **ii. Guideline:** Design architectural features that are an integral part of the building  
6 and discourage features that appear to be "tacked on" or artificially thin.
- 7
- 8 **iii. Guideline:** Material selection should exhibit high quality, particularly at street  
9 level. Examples include stone, brick, tile, concrete, metal, or transparent glass.  
10 Avoid residential lap siding on the ground floor of commercial or mixed use  
11 buildings.
- 12
- 13 **iv. Guideline:** Encourage the use of recessed windows that create shadow lines.

14

15 **e. Transparency**

- 16
- 17 **i. Intent:** Provide a visual link between the business space and the public sidewalk  
18 to create visual interest at the pedestrian level.
- 19
- 20 **ii. Standard:** A minimum of 60% of the building wall between 2' and 7' above the  
21 sidewalk and facing a street shall be transparent or lightly tinted glazing.  
22 Windows into parking garage space shall not qualify. If windows are not  
23 appropriate, glass display cases, decorative art (for example, murals or relief  
24 sculpture), significant architectural detailing or wall-covering landscaping may be  
25 used.

26

27 **f. Weather Protection**

- 28
- 29 **i. Intent:** Provide pedestrians rain protection, integrate individual buildings into the  
30 streetscape, and define the pedestrian zone.
- 31
- 32 **ii. Guideline:** Weather protection should be located between 8 and 12 feet above  
33 the walkway but a higher placement may be considered if the width of the  
34 protection is increased.
- 35
- 36 **iii. Standard:** Where commercial uses are located at ground floor, buildings shall  
37 provide pedestrian weather protection covering at least a 4' width of sidewalk  
38 along at least 75% of the street level frontage. Minimum adjustments needed to  
39 accommodate trees or other overhead objects may be allowed. Materials shall  
40 be limited to metal, glass, plexiglass or equivalent "hard" materials. Wood may  
41 be allowed on historic buildings. Fabric and vinyl fabric may only be used on  
42 retractable awnings.

43

44

45 **g. Blank Walls**

- 46
- 47 **i. Intent:** Provide visual interest and avoid the negative impacts of blank walls.
- 48
- 49 **ii. Standard:** A blank wall is is a wall or a portion of wall that is either (1) at least  
50 400 square feet in area with a length and a width of at least 10 feet that does not

1 include a window, door, building modulation or other architectural feature or (2)  
2 at the ground floor and over 6' in height with a horizontal length greater than 15'  
3 that does not include a window, pedestrian entry door, building modulation or  
4 other architectural feature.

5  
6 Any blank wall within 50' of, and visible from, a public street, public park or trail,  
7 residential zone shall be treated with at least one of the following:

8  
9 (1) Artwork, such as bas relief sculpture, mural or similar feature.

10  
11 (2) A landscaping bed containing trees, shrubs and/or vines on a trellis  
12 that will cover at least 60% of the wall within 3 years. Irrigation shall  
13 be provided unless the bed is at least 5' in width, open to the sky and  
14 draught resistant plants are used.

15  
16 (3) Architectural detailing incorporating trims, textures, reveals,  
17 contrasting materials, or other special detailing that provides visual  
18 interest.

19  
20 (4) An alternative method of providing visual interest at the pedestrian  
21 level approved through design review.

#### 22 23 **h. Roof Forms for Tall Buildings**

24  
25 **i. Intent:** Create a visually interesting skyline.

26  
27 **ii. Standards:** Buildings over 75 feet in height shall:

28  
29 (1) Incorporate at least one additional set back at or above the 5th floor,  
30 and

31  
32 (2) Incorporate features that create a visually distinct roof form. The  
33 following are examples of such features:

- 34  
35 ▪ Terraced set backs
- 36 ▪ Pitched or curved roof elements
- 37 ▪ Projecting cornice elements
- 38 ▪ Trellises along the parapet
- 39 ▪ Geometric forms
- 40 ▪ Change of material or color on the top floor

#### 41 42 43 **i. Public Open Spaces**

44  
45 **i. Intent:** Buildings adjacent to public open spaces such as public parks,  
46 plazas, and trails shall be oriented to promote activity and interaction, and  
47 provide visual interest to and from buildings so as to avoid the back-of-  
48 building effect.

1                    **ii. Guideline:** Locate some ground level features such as entries, windows,  
2                    decks, patios or similar features on buildings that interface with the public  
3                    open space.

4  
5                    **i. Projections Into the Public Right-of-Way**

6  
7                    **i. Intent:** Provide adequate separation between private residential spaces,  
8                    such as balconies, and the public walkway in order to make both the  
9                    private and public spaces comfortable. Projections should not interfere  
10                   with street amenities such as street trees, lighting or important public  
11                   views. (User note: Street encroachments are also regulated by the  
12                   building code and BMC Title 13.)

13  
14                   **ii. Standards:** No portion of a building may extend into the street right of  
15                   way except:

16  
17                   **(1) Decks and balconies shall not project more than 2' into the right-of-**  
18                   **way unless a fixed awning covers the entire space directly below the**  
19                   **deck or balcony at the ground floor level. A deck or balcony may not**  
20                   **in any case project more than 4' into the right-of-way.**

21  
22                   **(2) Bay windows and similar architecture features with a horizontal width**  
23                   **of not greater than 12' that project no more than 4' into the right-of-**  
24                   **way from the face of the exterior wall, provided they are separated**  
25                   **from like features by at least an equal width may protrude into the**  
26                   **right-of-way.**

27  
28                   **(3) Columns, cornices, trellises, eaves and similar minor and/or**  
29                   **decorative features, provided that arcades shall not be located in the**  
30                   **street right-of-way.**

31  
32                   **(4) Steps, stoops and similar ground level features provided there is a**  
33                   **minimum 12' of horizontal clearance to the street curb edge.**

34  
35                   **(5) Awnings, marquees and signs, subject to compliance with other**  
36                   **codes, provided no ground mounted support structures for these**  
37                   **features shall be located in the right-of-way.**

38  
39                   **k. Residential Design**

40  
41                   **i. Intent:** Residential projects should have an active and direct link to the  
42                   street pedestrian system while maintaining an appropriate transition from  
43                   public to private space.

44  
45                   **ii. Standards:**

46  
47                   **(1) Buildings containing residential uses shall have at least one covered**  
48                   **front residential entryway facing a public right-of-way and accessed**  
49                   **directly from the adjoining sidewalk.**

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- (2) Open exterior entry/exit balconies that face a right-of-way are prohibited.
- (3) Residential units built within 10' measured horizontally of an adjoining right-of-way or public space (property line) shall be constructed so that the finished floor elevation is at least 30" above the adjoining sidewalk.
- (4) Ground floor residential units fronting on a street shall have a private main entry to the sidewalk consisting of a stoop or porch. Patio access doors shall not be considered a main entry.
- (5) When private interior courtyards interface the street edge, use a landscape hedge, ornate fencing, architectural walls, or a combination of the above to carry the wall line at the street edge and define the private space.

**I. Commercial Space Ceiling Height**

- i. Intent:** Maintain traditional floor to floor heights and provide quality commercial floor space.
- ii. Standards:** Commercial ground floor space shall have a minimum floor to floor height of 12'.

3-20

## ATTACHMENT 2

DRAFT

### FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION BELLINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION JULY XX, 2009

*(THE FOLLOWING IS INTENDED AS A DRAFT FOR PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW. THESE FINDINGS CAN BE ADOPTED AS WRITTEN, OR MODIFIED TO SUPPORT THE FINAL PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION.)*

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

The Bellingham Planning Commission has held a public hearing and deliberated on the proposed Urban Village Design Guidelines and Standards. The Planning Commission has determined that the proposal complies with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan by guiding new development to contribute to the creation of quality pedestrian-oriented urban villages.

#### I. Findings of Fact

##### I. Project Summary

This proposal creates new guidelines and standards to facilitate and promote high quality pedestrian friendly development of urban villages in the City of Bellingham. The proposal, see **Attachment 1**, recommends the following actions to accomplish this goal:

- A. Adoption of revisions to **BMC 20.25.020 Applicability** to establish development thresholds for urban village design review by the Design Review Board and to clarify that multi-family design review does not apply to projects that are using urban village guidelines and standards;
- B. Adoption of revisions to **BMC 20.25.040 Decision Criteria** to establish decision criteria for urban village design, and
- C. Adoption of **20.25.070 Urban Village Design** to establish:
  - a. design departure requirements; and
  - b. design guidelines and standards;

##### II. Procedural History

The proposal to develop a set of standards and guidelines for urban villages along with many of the specific standards included in the proposal was presented to stakeholders during the Samish Way Urban Village public process and more recently to the stakeholders during the Fountain District public process. Creation of design standards and a review process was raised as a critical element by stakeholders, particularly nearby residents.

The proposed guidelines and standards were also presented to the City's Design Review Board and their recommended revisions are incorporated into the proposal.

A public hearing was held on June 18, 2009 by the Planning Commission.

### III. Public Comment

(Insert public comment tracker)

### IV. SEPA Determination

A Determination of Non-Significance was issued on May 20, 2009.

### V. Consistency with Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies and BMC Review Criteria

The Comprehensive Plan states that the City should accommodate anticipated population growth primarily through the creation of a series of urban villages. Generally, an urban village is an area that:

- Contains a mix of commercial, residential, and service uses;
- Provides amenities and necessities within walking distance;
- Is designed for pedestrians, bikes, and transit, as well as the automobile;
- Facilitates strong community connections and interaction by serving as a neighborhood focal point and providing active public spaces; and
- Promotes sustainability and quality design.

The Comprehensive Plan's Community Design goals and policies related to urban villages are as follows:

- Promote improvement in the quality of public, residential, commercial and industrial development and maintain a high quality environment by ensuring new construction and site development meets high standards (CDG-1);
- Allow for growth and diversity through standards that are adaptable to a variety of situations (CDG-3);
- Successfully integrate mixed use development within four types of urban villages, identified in the Land Use chapter, providing residents with shopping and employment within walking distance (CDG-4);
- Neighborhood and pocket urban villages are accessed by pedestrian scale streets that may include narrow pavement widths, on-street parking, landscaping strips, setback sidewalks, buildings close to the street, and parking in the side and/or rear yards (CDG-20);
- Buildings in transition areas between residential and non-residential should consider the context of both areas (CDP-1); and
- Areas with linear, sprawling commercial land uses along arterial streets that require driving from one business to another should be redeveloped over time into compact areas or nodes, in which many businesses can be easily accessed by pedestrians and transit (CDP-14).

## II. Conclusions

Based on the staff report, the proposed the Planning Commission concludes:

1. The proposal is consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
2. The proposal guides development towards the creation of safe, convenient and attractive pedestrian mixed-use villages and fosters less dependence on the automobile.
3. The proposal promotes high quality construction and site development in Bellingham's urban villages.

## III. Recommendations

Based on the Findings and Conclusions, the Bellingham Planning Commission recommends that the City approve the following:

- A. Revisions to **BMC 20.25.020 Applicability** to establish development thresholds for urban village design review by the Design Review Board and to clarify that multi-family design review does not apply to projects that are using urban village guidelines and standards;
- B. Revisions to **BMC 20.25.040 Decision Criteria** to establish decision criteria for urban village design, and
- C. Addition of **20.25.070 Urban Village Design** to establish:
  - a. design departure requirements; and
  - b. design guidelines and standards;

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Planning Commission Chair*

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Recording Secretary*

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City Attorney*



ATTACHMENT 3

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225

Telephone: (360) 778-8300 Fax: (360) 778-8302



Determination of Nonsignificance

**Name of Proposal: Urban Village Implementation**

**SEP2009-00023:** The proposal is intended to implement the City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan to facilitate and promote the development of urban villages by amending:

The Bellingham Municipal Code to establish:

- a. development thresholds for design review by the Design Review Board and clarity that city-wide design review does not apply to projects using urban village design guidelines and standards;
- b. decision criteria for urban villages;
- c. design departure requirements; and
- d. design guidelines and standards.

**Location of proposal:** Approximate number and location of Urban Villages are identified in the City of Bellingham's Comprehensive Plan. Each urban village (exact location) will be established through a separate legislative process.

**Proponent:** City of Bellingham, Planning & Community Development Department  
**Lead agency:** City of Bellingham, Planning & Community Development Department  
**Environmental Information Considered:**

- 1. SEPA Environmental Checklist, May 17, 2009
- 2. Comprehensive Plan Final EIS (City of Bellingham, July 1, 2004)

All materials associated with this proposal are available on the Planning and Community Development Department web site at [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org) (Enter "Samish Way Urban Village" in the City's 'Search' bar). Hard copies will be available approximately 2 weeks prior to the hearing date.

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed **environmental checklist** and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for at least 14 days from the signature date below.

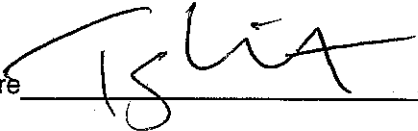
There is no comment period required for this proposal.

**Comments must be submitted by: June 15, 2009**

SCANNED  
Into Tidemark

Responsible official: **Tim Stewart, Director**  
**Planning & Community Development Department**  
**210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225**

Staff contact: Tara Sundin, Development Specialist II  
Planning and Community Development Department  
210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225  
(360) 778-8300, or [tsundin@cob.org](mailto:tsundin@cob.org).

Signature  Date 5-21-09

The City of Bellingham complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need special accommodations, please call (360) 778-8300 (voice) or (360) 676-6883 (TDD).

**Appeal Rights:** This Determination of Nonsignificance may be appealed to the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board in accordance with RCW 36.70A.280.