City of Burlington Comprehensive Plan

Volume I – Goals and Policies

CITY OF Burlington
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON INCORPORATED 1902

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1 Introduction

1.1 Summary

This plan is intended to guide the future growth and development of Burlington. It covers a 20 year period and describes how land will be used and developed, where roads and utilities will be built, and how public services and facilities will be provided. Although this plan will primarily be used by the City, it also affects actions taken by State agencies, the Burlington Edison School District, and other local governments.

By the year 2036 the population of Burlington is expected to grow by 3,808 people. At the same time 3,516 jobs will be added by local employers. Accommodating additional people and jobs means the City must change in significant ways. In 20 years Burlington will be a very different place than it is now, just as the City is very different today than it was 20 years ago. By making smart decisions and planning carefully, growth can be used to make the City a better place to live. Growth can enhance the quality of public services, expand options for entertainment, shopping, and education, and improve economic conditions for residents and businesses.

This plan is built around four broad principles. These four principles are intended to ensure that the benefits of future change are shared widely by those living, working, and doing business in Burlington, while avoiding the pitfalls often encountered by other communities.

- **Efficient and Cost Effective Growth.** Burlington will make smart decisions about growth and development. By considering the relationship between land use and public services, the City can continue to provide high quality services in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

- **Access to Jobs, Services, and Entertainment.** By maintaining the Burlington's compact form, future residents will enjoy convenient access to jobs, shopping, entertainment, and services.

- **Preventing Irreversible Impacts.** The long term impacts of decisions will be carefully evaluated and incremental progress will be prioritized over drastic change.

- **Embracing the Future.** Successful cities change and evolve over time. Burlington will maintain its connection with the past while moving confidently into the future. Rather than merely replicating past practices, decisions will be based on the best knowledge and information available. Burlington will innovate rather than follow.

1.2 Purpose

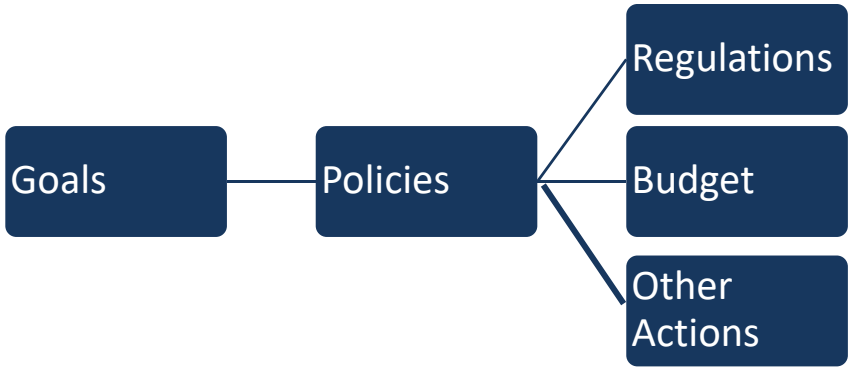
Cities and counties in the State of Washington are required to adopt comprehensive plans. Comprehensive plans must cover a 20 year period and must demonstrate how future population and economic growth will be accommodated. Plans must also show where housing and businesses will be located, and explain how public services, such as sewage disposal, fire protection, and public schools will be provided.

While planning is required by law, it's also a good idea. With careful planning costly mistakes can be avoided, public services can be provided at a lower cost, environmental impacts can be minimized, and the risks associated with natural hazards, such as floods, can be reduced.

1.3 Organization

The Burlington Comprehensive Plan includes two volumes. Volume I is organized into eight separate elements. These elements are essentially chapters and each one addresses a specific topic including; land use, housing, natural resources, economic development, transportation, parks and recreation, and public services and facilities. An implementation element is also included and describes how the plan will be used, updated, and amended. Each element is based on background information, research, and other supporting documentation. Volume II includes the technical data, studies, and supporting information used to develop the plan.

Each element of the Comprehensive Plan includes a list of goals and policies. The goals of the comprehensive plan describe *what* the City is trying to achieve. They are intended to be realistic, achievable, and measureable. The goals have been drafted to allow the City to periodically assess its progress. The goals are followed by a list of associated policies. These policies are intended to describe *how* the City's goals will be achieved. By law, all of the City's actions, including its regulations and budget decisions, must be consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



2 Land Use

2.1 Introduction

This element describes how land will be used in the future, shows how population and job growth will be accommodated, and identifies where different types of development, such as housing, stores, and industrial areas, will be located. The Land Use Element also identifies areas of the City that aren't suitable for development due to inadequate utilities, low capacity roads, hazardous conditions, or environmentally sensitive areas.

Burlington's ability to expand outward is constrained by floodplains and agricultural lands. As a result, the City has long enjoyed a compact footprint. Although this pattern of development makes accommodating growth challenging, it also fosters a strong sense of community identity and allows the City to deliver high quality services at a relatively low cost. The goals and policies of the Land Use Element are intended to maintain the Burlington's compact footprint while accommodating population growth and economic development.

In order to achieve the City's desired pattern of development, future population and employment growth will be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries. A significant portion of this growth will be directed to three Priority Development Areas centered along Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue. Additional development will also occur in areas with good access to transportation and utilities. Development will be limited, or directed away from, environmentally sensitive or hazardous areas.

The primary objectives of the Land Use Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Compact growth.** Accommodate most, if not all, of the City's projected growth within existing municipal boundaries. Land in the unincorporated urban growth area will only be developed if necessary.

- **Efficient and cost effective development.** Concentrate development and increase densities in existing developed areas with good access to transportation, services, and utilities. Development will be discouraged in areas with limited access to transportation, services, and utilities, or in areas with significant environmental constraints.

- **Access to jobs and services.** Residential densities will be increased in areas closest to jobs, shopping, and services. A significant share of the City's future growth will be directed to three designated Priority Development Areas centered along Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue.

2.2 Requirements

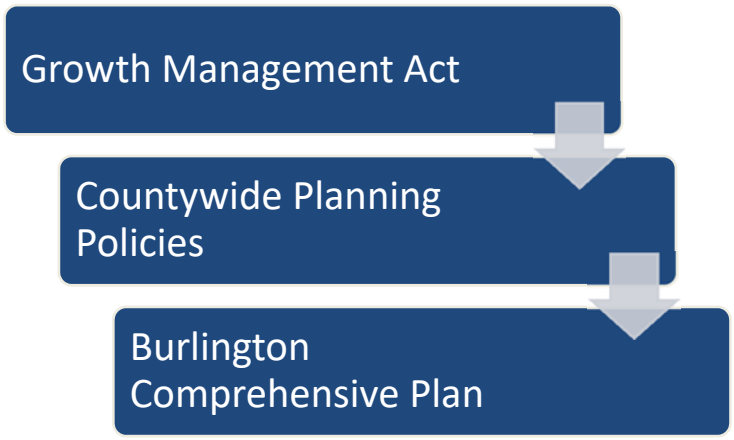
2.2.1 Washington State Growth Management Act

Under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) the Land Use Element must show where, and how, things like housing, businesses, public facilities, parks, and utilities will be accommodated. The Land Use Element must include a discussion of existing and projected conditions, describe planned residential densities, building and development forms, and include measures to address growth related impacts.

A key component of the GMA is the establishment of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs). UGAs are intended to concentrate growth and development within cities and preserve farm land and natural resources by limiting sprawling development in rural areas. UGAs are also intended to reduce the cost of providing public services such as sewer, fire protection, and transportation. Importantly, UGAs must have enough land to accommodate 20 years of population growth. UGAs must also have enough land to accommodate the public facilities, such as schools and parks, needed to serve the projected growth.

2.2.2 Countywide Planning Policies

The GMA requires counties, and the cities within them, to adopt countywide planning policies (CWPPs). Countywide planning policies are intended to coordinate planning decisions of regional importance, ensure that plans of neighboring jurisdictions don't conflict with one another, and fully implement the goals of the GMA. Counties and cities are required to work together using a collaborative process to adopt, or amend, CWPPs.



In Skagit County, countywide planning activities are subject to a Framework Agreement adopted in 2002. The Framework Agreement covers the adoption of CWPPs, the establishment of UGAs, and the allocation of residential, commercial, and industrial growth to each city in the County. The CWPPs adopted by Skagit County envision directing 80 percent of the County's population growth to cities and the remaining 20 percent to rural areas. The adopted CWPPs state that between 2015 and 2036, Burlington must accommodate an additional 3,808 people and 3,516 jobs.

Cities in Skagit County must allow residential development at urban densities and are required to direct development to mixed use neighborhoods that have good access to public services and facilities. Infill and redevelopment are strongly encouraged, and cities must use the land within their existing municipal boundaries before annexing and developing additional land. Development must be directed away from critical areas, aquatic resources, and agricultural land and open space corridors must be identified. The goals and policies of the Land Use Element are consistent with, and intended to implement, the Skagit County CWPPs.

2.3 Current and Future Conditions

2.3.1 Current Conditions

The City currently covers 4.26 square miles (2,728 acres). An additional 438 acres is located in the City's unincorporated urban growth area. As shown in table 2.3.1 below, approximately 32 percent of the City's land mass is designated for residential uses. Approximately 23 percent is available for mixed commercial and residential development, 20 percent is designated for industrial and commercial uses, and the remaining area is reserved for parks, open space, and public facilities. With the exception of park and open spaces areas, very little of the City is undeveloped. As of 2015 the City of Burlington has a population of 10,464 and supported a workforce of 9,896.

Table 2.1 – Land Area by Comprehensive Plan Designation

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation	Area (acres)	Percentage	Planned Uses
Commercial & Industrial (CI)	542.24	19.8	Industrial, Storage, Outdoor Sales, Distribution
Mixed-Use Commercial (MUC)	567.90	20.8	Retail, Offices, Higher Density Residential, and Medical
Mixed-Use Residential (MUR)	65.12	2.4	Residential and Small Scale Commercial Uses
Parks and Conservation (PC)	319.75	11.7	Parks, Conservation Areas, Flood Control, and Surface Water Management
Public Facilities & Transportation (PFT)	353.02	12.9	Public Buildings, Streets, Freeways, Utilities, and Railroads
Residential Attached (RA)	223.96	8.2	Attached Dwellings
Residential Detached (RD)	655.82	24	Detached Dwellings
Total:	***2,728***	***100***	

2.3.2 Growth and Development Capacity

Based on projections included in the Countywide Planning Policies, between 2015 and 2036, Burlington will grow by 3,808 people and add 3,516 jobs. By law the City must demonstrate where and how this growth will be accommodated. An analysis was conducted to assess the City's ability to accommodate this growth (see Volume II).

The analysis revealed that, based on the regulations and policies in effect prior to the adoption of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the all of the projected population growth and most of the employment growth could be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries. However, the analysis also revealed a shortage of land for attached housing and a need to accommodate more employment.

This plan addresses the housing and employment needs identified in the Land Capacity Analysis by promoting a broad range of housing types throughout the City, encouraging higher density housing and mixed use development in centrally located areas, and by allowing a broader range of commercial uses in certain residential areas. This plan also includes changes aimed at significantly improving land utilization and employment densities in the commercial and mixed use areas.

Importantly this plan does not include any expansion of the City's Urban Growth Area or municipal boundaries. Instead, the City of Burlington will accommodate all of the population and employment growth projected through the year 2036 within the City's existing municipal boundaries. This pattern of development will minimizes infrastructure costs, protect valuable agricultural land, avoid further urban expansions in flood-prone areas, and make future transportation demand more manageable.

The following tables illustrate how, and where, the City intends to accommodate future growth. Table 2.2 illustrates the City's existing and projected population and employment. Table 2.3 shows how this growth will be allocated within the City, and Table 2.4 demonstrates that sufficient capacity exists in each Comprehensive Plan Map designation to accommodate the projected growth.

Table 2.2 – Population and Employment Growth		
	Population (people)	**Employment (jobs)**
2015	10,464	9,896
2036	14,272	13,412
Projected Growth	***3,808***	***3,516***

Source: 2015 SCOG GMA Steering Committee population and employment allocations. Note: SCOG data covers a 21 year period between 2015 and 2036.

Table 2.3 – Distribution of Allocated Population and Employment Growth[(1)]			
Comprehensive Plan Map Designation	**Population**	**Housing Units**	**Employment**
Residential Detached (RD)	1,636[(3)]	622	N/A[(2)]
Residential Attached (RA)	600[(3)]	228	N/A[(2)]
Mixed-Use Residential (MUR)	200	76	163
Mixed-Use Commercial (MUC)	1,372[(3)]	522	2,454
Commercial Industrial (CI)	None	None	621
Parks and Conservation (PC)	None	None	None
Public Facilities and Transportation (PFT)	None	None	279
Total	***3,808***	***1,448***	***3,516***

Notes:
(1) This table represents the minimum projected growth for each Comprehensive Plan Map designation based on the total population and employment allocations issued by the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG).
(2) A limited number of minor commercial uses are permitted in the RD and RA designations and some job growth is likely; however, it is not expected to be statistically significant and has not been included here.
(3) Based on recent development trends there is a high probability the percentage of attached housing may be significantly larger than represented here. As a result significantly more residential development would be expected in the MUC designation with a corresponding reduction in the RD designation.

Table 2.4 – Development Capacity by Comprehensive Plan Designation[(1)]			
Comprehensive Plan Map Designation	**Population**	**Housing Units**	**Employment**
Residential Detached (RD)	3,019	1,188	N/A[(2)]
Residential Attached (RA)	1,491	567	173[(3)]
Mixed-Use Residential (MUR)			
Mixed-Use Commercial (MUC)	3,861	1,468	3,001
Commercial Industrial (CI)	None	None[(4)]	602[(3)]
Parks and Conservation (PC)	None	None	None
Public Facilities and Transportation (PFT)	None	None[(5)]	279
Total	***8,476***	***3,223***	***4,055***

Notes:
(1) This table represents the estimated population, housing, and employment capacity of each Comprehensive Plan Map designation. Capacity estimates are based on the Land Capacity Analysis in Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan, adjusted to account for the changes made as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update.(2) A limited number of minor commercial uses are permitted in the RD and RA designations and some job growth is likely; however, it is not expected to be statistically significant and has not been included here. (3) The MUR designation is associated with two zones (MUR-1 and MUR-2). The MUR-2 zones allows small scale industrial uses but no attempt has been made to separately estimate the industrial vs commercial capacity of each zone. As noted the CI designation has an estimated capacity deficit of 19 jobs. The allocation in Table 3.2 is based on the City's projected industrial employment growth which was only allocated to the CI designation. It's likely that some portion of this growth will be accommodated in the MUR designation, but no estimate is available.

2.3.3 Public Services and Facilities

Approximately 25 percent (673 acres) is reserved for public services and facilities, including schools, parks, flood control and surface water management areas, and City facilities. As detailed in the Public Facilities and Services Element (Chapter 6), the City has sufficient land to accommodate capital facility needs. The Public Facilities and Services Element establishes a process for continually reassessing capital facility needs and adjusting comprehensive plan and zoning designations as necessary to ensure an adequate supply of land for future capital facility needs.

Importantly, the goals and policies of the Land Use Element are intended to minimize the need for new facilities and services by locating growth in areas with good access to existing infrastructure and services.

2.3.4 Natural Hazards and Environmental Protection

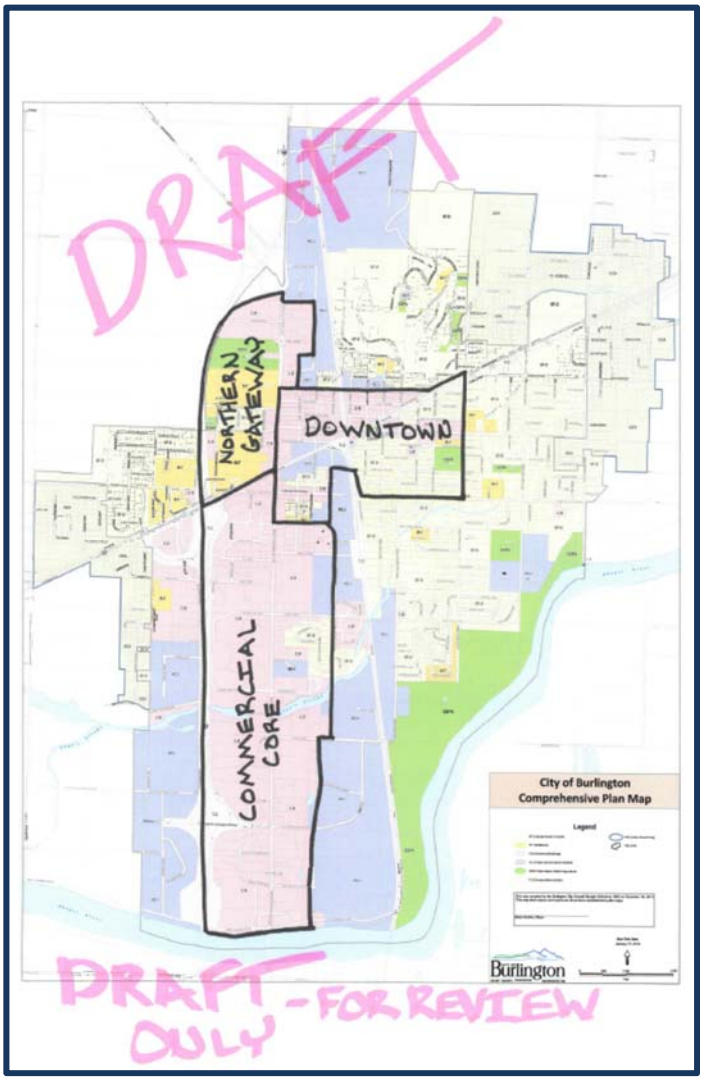
Several areas of the City contain unique natural resources or are subject to particularly hazardous conditions. These areas include Gages Slough, Burlington Hill, and the Skagit River Corridor. These three areas have limited development potential and have been designated as Special Management Areas (SMAs). This plan establishes additional policies and regulations for the SMAs. The SMA policies and regulations are intended to direct growth away from SMAs, limit development densities, discourage land divisions, protect natural resources, and limit exposure to natural hazards.

Future decisions regarding UGA expansions and annexations will be made in a way that avoids hazardous or environmentally sensitive areas. The Natural Resources Element (Chapter 4) includes a more detailed overview of the City's policies for managing critical areas, protecting the natural environment, and mitigating natural hazards.

2.3.5 Future Land Use Plan

Over the next 20 years the Burlington's population and job base will grow. Accommodating this growth means the density of new residential development must be increased. As much as 80 percent of this growth will be directed to three centrally located Priority Development Areas, including:

- Northern Gateway
- Downtown
- Commercial Core



These areas are referred to as "Priority Development Areas" (PDAs) and have been established to provide centrally located areas for intensive commercial and residential growth. They are intended to improve access to jobs, shopping, and entertainment, and to support the City's economy by increasing the number of people living near businesses. Directing future growth to the PDAs will also have significant transportation benefits by shortening travel distances, improving access to transit, and making walking and bicycling easier.

Each PDA is unique and has been created to foster a specific mix of residential, commercial and public uses. A more complete description of each PDA is provided below.

Northern Gateway. The Northern Gateway is located in the northwest corner of the City and contains a number of schools, parks, public facilities, and a dense concentration of attached housing. The Northern Gateway has excellent access to transit services and is located within walking distance of downtown Burlington, making the Northern Gateway suitable for high density residential development, local services, and public facilities. However, access constraints along Burlington Boulevard make traditional commercial development difficult.

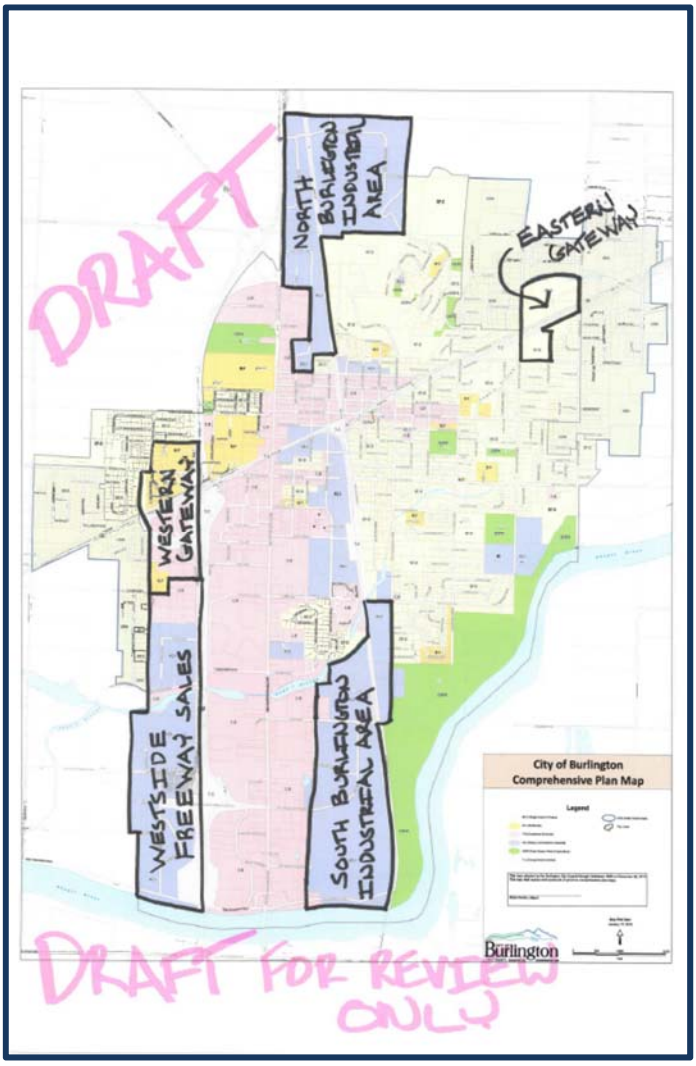
Downtown. The Downtown Growth Area is centered along Fairhaven Avenue, the City's historic business district. Businesses along Fairhaven Avenue include small retail establishments, professional offices, restaurants, and bars. The residential areas surrounding the Fairhaven Avenue corridor are comprised of small multiunit buildings and detached homes on smaller

lots. The Downtown Planning Areas is intended to accommodate new people and businesses while preserving and enhancing the character of the City's historic downtown. Building sizes and footprints will be smaller and design regulations will emphasize compatibility with existing development. Small scale retail and service oriented uses will be emphasized.

Commercial Core. The most intensive development will be directed to the Commercial Core Planning Area. In this area, retail, commercial entertainment, and food service will continue to be emphasized. More intensive multiunit housing development will also be permitted but important street frontages will be reserved for commercial uses that depend on good visibility and access. All areas of the Commercial Core are within walking distance of Burlington Boulevard, which provides convenient access to businesses and frequent transit service.

Five Special Development Areas (SDAs) have also been identified to meet specific needs. As shown on map XX these areas include:

- Westside Freeway Sales
- North Burlington Industrial
- South Burlington Industrial
- Western Gateway
- Urban Holding



Westside Freeways Sales. Uses requiring good freeway access and visibility, such vehicle and heavy equipment dealerships, will be directed to the Westside Freeway Sales area. The uses permitted in this area have impacts or characteristics that make them incompatible with residential development or general commercial uses.

North and South Industrial. Traditional industrial uses, such as manufacturing, warehouses, and outdoor storage will be concentrated in the North and South Burlington Industrial areas. These areas are intended to maintain large blocks of industrial land away from the City's commercial and residential areas and have good access to arterial streets and rail transportation. Uses permitted in these areas may operate at night, produce noise or odors, or involve hazardous materials.

Western Gateway. The Western Gateway Planning Areas is located at the City's west entrance along State Highway 20 and is intended to provide the surrounding neighborhood with convenience services, such as small stores and restaurants, and accommodate businesses catering to travelers on Highway 20, such as gas stations and car washes. Attached residential uses will also be permitted in this areas.

Urban Holding. The Urban Holding Area includes the unincorporated portions of the City's Urban Growth Area. The purpose of the Urban Holding designation is to promote phased development and annexations and to coordinate permitting and planning functions with Skagit County. Generally development will not be permitted in the Urban Holding Area until annexation occurs. This plan establishes policies to ensure permitting and planning decisions made by Skagit County are consistent with the Burlington Comprehensive Plan.

While the Growth Areas described above provide a broad organizational structure for future development, they don't cover the entire City or provide a high level of detail. In order to illustrate the City's intended pattern of development in more detail, a Comprehensive Plan Map has also been developed. The Comprehensive Plan Map divides the City into a number of designations, each of which is intended to facilitate a different type of development. Table 2.3 shows the distribution of housing and job growth by Comprehensive Plan Map designation.

2.4 Land Use Goals and Policies

The goals and policies of this section will be used shape the way land is used and developed. The bold headings below identify the City's land use goals. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington, and by other government agencies, shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

2.4.1 Compact Development: Burlington is surrounded by floodplains and valuable agricultural land. To protect these resources, minimize the amount of land exposed to flood hazards, and to achieve the GMA goal of reducing sprawl, all of the population and employment growth allocated to Burlington will be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries and the intensity of development will gradually be increased over the 20 year planning period.

1. The zoning and comprehensive plan maps shall include a sufficient quantity of land, with sufficient density allowances, to accommodate the type and quantity of housing identified in the Housing Element, the type and quantity of commercial and industrial development identified in the Economic Development Element. The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning maps shall also be consistent with the Parks and Recreation Element and Public Facilities and Services Element.

2. The addition of new land to the City's municipal boundaries will be phased to promote efficient development patterns and ensure urban services, roads, and utilities are extended in a rational, cost effective manner. To carry out this policy annexations should only occur in the following circumstances:

    a. The supply of developable land within the City's existing municipal boundaries will be exhausted within eight years and the annexation is consistent with the City's annexation plan; or

    b. The annexation is necessary to provide sewer service to a property with a failing septic system; or

    c. To incorporate City owned land or facilities; or

    d. To accommodate a public facility that cannot reasonably be accommodated within the current municipal boundaries.

3. The average density of new residential development should be at least 25 dwelling units per acre in areas designated RA or MUR and 35 dwelling units per acre in areas designated MUC. New commercial development in the MUC designation should achieve a floor area ratio (FAR) of at least .50 or greater. This policy is not intended to require individual developments to achieve a specific level of density, rather the City's zoning and

development regulations should be drafted with the intent of enabling development at, or above, these levels.

4. Detached residential development should be permitted only in the RD designation; however, higher density forms of detached residential development, such as cottage housing and small lot divisions, may be appropriate in the RA and MUR designations in limited circumstances. Detached residential development shall not be permitted in the MUC designation.

2.4.2 Development Costs: There are many benefits to growth and development, including economic opportunities and more diverse recreation, shopping, and entertainment options. However, if managed improperly development can also impose costs on the City's residents and taxpayers that exceed its benefits. In order to avoid creating future financial burdens and liabilities, the City will ensure development pays for itself and consider the per capita or per unit cost of providing services when making land use decisions.

1. Direct new development to areas where utilities and public services are available. Permitted densities should be highest in commercial mixed use areas and lowest in outlying areas with low capacity utilities and poor access to high capacity transportation routes or transit service.

2. Infrastructure investments should be prioritized in areas intended to accommodate high intensity development, particularly the Downtown, Commercial Core, and Norther Gateway planning areas.

3. Prior to annexing land or increasing the size of the urban growth area, the costs and benefits of various development scenarios shall be analyzed to ensure development occurs in the most cost effective locations. The long term costs and benefits of proposed annexations or urban growth area expansions shall be compared with the costs and benefits of other actions that might also accommodate the anticipated growth.

4. When new development creates a need for offsite improvements, such as transportation projects, schools, parks, or fire protection, impact fees shall be used to defray the cost of providing these facilities and improvements. It may be appropriate to waive, or reduce, impact fees in limited circumstances when doing so would provide an equivalent public benefit.

5. New lots created through plats and binding site plans should be "building ready" and all of the onsite improvements necessary to support development shall be in place before the plat or binding site plan is recorded, including; streets, sidewalks, water and sewer service, electrical power, and storm-water management improvements.

2.4.3 Natural Resources: While the overall objective of this plan is to increase the amount of development occurring in the City, some areas are unsuitable for development due to the presence of natural hazards or environmentally sensitive areas. The City will maintain or improve the functions and values of critical areas and take steps to reduce the risks associated with natural hazards.

1. Development should be prohibited in hazardous areas unless protective improvements or other mitigation measures can reduce risks to an acceptable level. The creation of new lots or parcels in highly hazardous areas should be prohibited except in limited circumstances.

2. Land within a designated floodplain may only be added to the City's urban growth area if the land will be used for park, conservation, or open space purposes, or if the land is already developed at, or near, urban densities.

3. Infill and redevelopment within the City's existing municipal boundaries should be encouraged to limit the ecological and hydrologic impacts associated with urbanizing rural or agricultural land.

4. Gages Slough, Burlington Hill, and the corridor along the Skagit River dike shall be designated as "Special Management Areas". Special goals and policies for these areas are identified in the Natural Resources Element. Densities and uses shall be limited in these areas and site planning and subdivision techniques that limit development impacts, such as clustering, should be employed. Public acquisition of open space land and conservation easements should be prioritized.

5. Support and permit the construction of dikes and other flood control improvements that protect land within the current UGA or municipal boundaries. Annexations or UGA expansions beyond the boundaries of existing or planned flood protection improvements shall be discouraged or prohibited.

2.4.4 Infill and Redevelopment: In order to ensure land is used as efficiently as possible, and to support the City's retail and service trades, residential growth will be directed to mixed use areas and the intensity of new development will be increased over time.

1. Minimize barriers to new multiunit housing development RA, MUR, and MUC designations.

2. With the exception of the Northern Gateway Growth Area, ground floor commercial uses should be required along arterial street frontages in the MUC designation. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted when ground floor commercial uses are not feasible due to access limitations, flood elevation requirements, or other similar constraints.

3. Provide good access within, and between, developments. New developments shall provide vehicle and pedestrian access improvements at regular intervals, connections should be provided to all surrounding streets and properties, and landlocked or difficult to access

parcels shall not be created. New developments should contribute to, and function as part of, a coherent and interconnected transportation system.

4. Gradually increase densities in the RD designation by permitting infill development such as small lot divisions, cottage housing, accessory dwelling units, and duplexes on corner lots. Higher density housing types may also be appropriate in limited circumstances and may be permitted as part of a cluster development or through a conditional use permit process that ensures visual compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

5. New development should contribute to, and function as part of, a coherent, interconnected transportation system. Landlocked, isolated, or difficult to develop areas should not be created and access to existing sites should be improved. Streets, sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and other access improvements should be designed and constructed to facilitate future development and redevelopment.

2.4.5 Compatibility: Generally this plan envisions increasing the flexibility with which land can be used. Some land uses are however, incompatible and should be separated. Land use policies and regulations will be adopted to separate uses which are unsafe or detrimental to surrounding residents and businesses.

1. Uses involving outdoor storage, material processing, outdoor sales, loud and consistent noise emissions, or noxious odors shall only be permitted in the CI designation and should be directed to the North and South Burlington Industrial areas.

2. Uses that generate large amounts of traffic, such as general retail, eating and drinking establishments, medical clinics, social service providers, and other similar uses shall not be permitted in the RA or RD designations and should only be permitted in the MUC designation.

3. In areas designated MUC, the Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue street frontages should be reserved for uses that that generate high levels of activity and rely on a highly visible location. Examples of appropriate uses include; retail, eating and drinking establishments, and commercial entertainment. Residential development, social service providers, health care facilities, and institutional uses are not appropriate ground floor uses in these locations.

4. Auto, R.V, and heavy equipment dealerships shall be prohibited in the Northern Gateway, Western Gateway, Commercial Core and Downtown PDA. Instead, such uses should be directed to the Westside Freeway Sales SPA.

2.4.6 Long Range Planning: Planning decisions can have long term impacts that are impossible to reverse and difficult to mitigate. The City will only make long range planning decisions after careful study and analysis, with the goal of growing in a deliberate, incremental fashion. Decisions will balance long term costs, impacts, and benefits.

1. Land outside the City's municipal boundaries, but within the urban growth area will be designated Urban Holding (UH). Development in such areas shall be limited to agriculture, forestry, and detached homes on existing lots. Land divisions, attached housing, and commercial and industrial development shall be prohibited prior to annexation. Public facilities and transportation improvements may also be permitted prior to annexation as minimally necessary to serve the existing rural population or address regional needs.

2. A detailed annexation plan should be developed for the unincorporated UGA. This plan should divide the unincorporated UGA into a number of analysis zones, identify potential infrastructure needs and costs, and rank the analysis zones based on their annexation priority. Those analysis zones which have the greatest potential to accommodate development at the lowest cost should be given the highest priority for annexation. Until the annexation plan is complete, development in the unincorporated UGA shall be limited to detached homes on existing lots, agricultural uses, and public facilities.

3. For land recently added to the UGA, annexation shall not occur until all associated appeal periods or proceedings have lapsed or been resolved.

4. The City supports the intergovernmental planning process identified in the Countywide Planning Policies and Framework Agreement. All decisions regarding growth allocations and UGAs shall be consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies and Framework Agreement.

5. The City shall not support or approve an expansion of its UGA unless the long term financial, environmental, economic, and social impacts of the proposed expansion have been carefully evaluated. In all cases, the costs and benefits of expanding the UGA shall be evaluated and compared to other available alternatives, such as revising the City's development regulations and planning policies to facilitate more infill and redevelopment. The UGA will not be expanded until all other viable options have been fully explored and shown to be infeasible.

6. UGA expansions shall only be considered during a GMA mandated periodic update except in the following circumstances:

    a. The supply of developable land within the existing UGA will be exhausted within five years; or

b. The expansion is necessary to provide sewer service to a property with a failing septic system where a documented public health hazard exists that cannot be addressed in any other way; or

c. The expansion is necessary to accommodate an essential public facility that cannot be accommodated within an existing UGA in Skagit County.

7. A very long range plan, covering a period beyond 20 years, should be developed for the area surrounding the City's UGA. This plan should identify land suitable for future UGA expansions. The plan should also identify land that is unsuitable for future urban growth due to flood hazards, critical areas, regional open space plans, or the need to preserve agricultural land. The City should work with surrounding jurisdictions and regional planning groups to develop, and implement, this plan.

8. The City shall, through its land use and capital spending decisions, development regulations, and regional coordination prioritize growth in the following order and locations:

    a. Priority development areas;

    b. Other areas within the City's incorporated boundaries;

    c. Annexation of land in the existing unincorporated UGA;

    d. Expansion of the City's UGA.

2.5 Land Use Designations

A central organizing component of this plan is the comprehensive plan map. The comprehensive plan map divides the city into different areas call “comprehensive plan designations”. Each designation is associated with one or more zoning map designations. The comprehensive plan map is used to evaluate potential zoning changes and inform other policy based decisions. The zoning map is used to regulate development, identify permitted and prohibited uses, and evaluate permit applications. By law the zoning map must be consistent with the comprehensive plan map.

This section identifies the land use designations used on the comprehensive plan map. The purpose of each designation is identified below, followed by policies describing where the designation will be used, the types of development that should be permitted, or prohibited, and the corresponding zoning map designations. The designation criteria in this section are intended to be used as a guide for long range planning decisions. The designation criteria are intended to be read together and interpreted in a way that harmonizes the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

2.5.1 Residential Detached (RD): The RD designation is intended to accommodate lower density development consisting of detached residential structures and related accessory uses. This designation is applied to areas of the City that are not suitable for more intensive uses due to existing development patterns, infrastructure constraints, access limitations, or natural conditions.

1. Designation Criteria. The following factors and characteristics shall be used to identify areas where an RD designation may be appropriate:

    a. Existing Development Pattern: If the area is already developed, it is developed at, or near, the maximum permitted density, is uniformly characterized by detached residential structures, and is located more than 1,320 feet from a MUC or MUR designation. With few exceptions there are no commercial uses or attached residential structures. Undeveloped areas with scattered, low density residential development may also be assigned an RD designation if the area is remote, cannot be provided with urban services in a cost effective manner, or if significant critical area constraints are present.

    b. Proximity to Services. The area is undeveloped but is difficult to access or is located a significant distance from commercial services. This designation is particularly appropriate for areas that are more than 2,640 feet (one half mile) from a Mixed-Use Commercial designation.

    c. Critical Areas and Natural Hazards: Extensive or particularly severe natural hazards or critical area constraints are present, and these constraints cannot be

easily mitigated. In particular, areas with extensive forest cover, wetlands, or geologic hazards may be considered appropriate for an RD designation.

d. Public Facilities and Services: Roads are narrow, substandard, or cannot handle additional traffic; emergency response times are longer than average, and major utility upgrades would be required to accommodate new development. No changes are identified in the Capital Facilities Element that would significantly improve existing facilities and services.

2. Permitted Building Types. Detached residences and accessory buildings. Buildings should generally contain only one dwelling unit, except that accessory dwellings shall be permitted. Other forms of residential development may be appropriate in limited circumstances, including small lot land divisions, cottage housing, and duplexes on corner lots. Higher density housing types such as townhomes, horizontally attached dwellings, and small multiunit buildings may be permitted conditionally or in a cluster development, particularly within walking distance of schools, parks, and services.

3. The size, height, footprint, and bulk of buildings should be limited consistent with the goal of maintaining the general look and feel of a traditional detached residential environment. Open space and landscaping should predominate over buildings and pavement. Buildings should be set back from the street to establish a consistent buffer of landscaping between the building line and the street. Fences between the building line and the street should be low and visually unobtrusive. Signs should generally not be permitted except for small building mounted signs advertising home businesses.

4. Residential densities shall not exceed 15 dwelling units per acre; however, density may be averaged through clustering and higher densities may be permitted through a conditional use permit process. New development should generally have a minimum density of six dwelling units per acre except in areas where more intensive development is impractical due to critical areas, infrastructure deficiencies, special management areas restrictions, or other similar limitations. Such areas should be assigned an RD-1 zoning designation.

5. Nonresidential uses shall be limited to uses that have traffic and activity patterns compatible with, and similar to, lower density residential uses. Industrial, manufacturing, retail sales, eating and drinking establishments, and other similar uses shall not be permitted.

6. The scale and intensity of nonresidential uses shall be limited to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood or a small geographic area. Daycare facilities, small schools, meeting facilities, home businesses, and minor utilities may be appropriate provided steps are taken to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses and building types.

7. Zoning. The RD designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the RD-1 and RD-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. RD-1: An extremely low density residential land use designation shall be established and should be applied to areas with severe natural hazard risks, widespread critical areas, significant infrastructure constraints that will not be remedied during the course of the planning period, and areas that are remote or difficult to access.

    b. RD-2: All other areas in the RD designation.

2.5.2 Residential Attached (RA): The purpose of the residential attached designation is to facilitate the development of attached dwellings such as duplexes, townhomes, apartments, and condominiums. The RA designation may be applied to areas of existing development characterized by attached residential buildings, or a mix of attached and detached residential buildings. The RA designation may also be applied to undeveloped parcels that are close to major transportation routes and services but are not be appropriate for commercial or mixed used development due to the configuration of existing parcels, inadequate access, or proximity to existing residential areas. The RA designation is subject to the following application and use policies:

1. The following factors and characteristics shall be used to identify areas where an RA designation may be appropriate:

    a. Existing Development Pattern: If the area is already developed, the existing development pattern is characterized by the presence of attached residential structures or a mix of attached and detached residences. Few, if any, commercial or industrial uses are present. Undeveloped or sparsely developed areas may also be considered for an RA designation if the area is within walking distance of an area designated MUC or MUR and is otherwise suitable for more intensive development.

    b. Proximity to Services: Commercial services are nearby and would generally be considered within walking distance. The area is not difficult to access but would not be suitable for commercial development because of poor visibility or a lack of traffic. Generally, the RA designation is particularly appropriate for areas within 1,320 feet (one quarter mile) of a MUC or MUR designation, but may also be considered for areas within 2,640 feet (one half mile) of an MUC or MUR designation.

    c. Critical Areas and Natural Hazards: Critical areas and natural hazards are either not present or are relatively insignificant. If critical areas are present, their functions and values have been significantly compromised by previous

development activities and new development would not increase natural hazard risks.

d. Public Facilities and Services: Emergency response times are average or better than average. Streets and utilities can either accommodate new development or the Capital Facilities Element identifies the improvements necessary to support medium density residential uses.

2. Permitted uses should primarily consist of attached residential buildings that share a common wall, such as apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and duplexes. Related accessory uses are also acceptable. New detached housing should not be permitted, except higher density detached housing, such as cottage housing and small lot divisions, may be acceptable. New residential development should have a density of at least eight dwelling units per acre.

3. The size, height, footprint, and bulk of buildings should be limited consistent with the goal of providing a visual and functional transition between residential and non-residential areas. Landscaping and setback requirements should be designed to achieve a look and feel similar to traditional detached residential environments. Fences between the building line and the street should be low and visually unobtrusive. Parking lots should be located behind buildings or fully screened from view.

4. Nonresidential uses shall be limited to uses that have traffic and activity patterns compatible with, and similar to, residential uses. Industrial, manufacturing, retail sales, eating and drinking establishments, and other similar uses shall not be permitted.

5. The scale and intensity of nonresidential uses shall be limited to meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood or a small geographic area. Daycare facilities, small schools, meeting facilities, home businesses, and minor utilities may be appropriate provided steps are taken to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential uses and building types.

6. The RA designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the RA-1 and RA-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. RA-1: Areas with a pattern of small lots, fragmented property ownership, and smaller attached or detached residential buildings. This zoning designation is particularly appropriate in areas characterized by a mix of attached and detached buildings or as a transition zone between attached and detached residential areas. Acceptable uses include horizontally attached housing, such as duplexes and townhomes, and small multiunit buildings. Higher density detached housing development, such as small lot divisions and cottage housing, may be appropriate in limited circumstances.

b. RA-2: Areas with larger lots, uniform ownership patterns, and larger attached residential buildings. This designation should facilitate the construction of larger multiunit buildings while prohibiting detached housing and other low intensity uses.

2.5.3 Mixed Use Residential (MUR): This designation is intended to accommodate a mix of attached housing and commercial uses with an emphasis on residential uses. Non-residential uses such as, professional offices, craft industries, home businesses, contractor storage yards, and other similar uses that are compatible with the intended residential character of the area. Broadly, the MUR designation is intended to provide a gradual transition from areas of more intensive commercial development to areas that are exclusively residential and to recognize areas where historical development patterns have created a mix of uses that is predominantly residential in character.

1. The following factors and characteristics shall be used to identify areas where an MUR designation may be appropriate:

    a. Existing Development Pattern: If the area is already developed, the existing development consists of a mix of commercial and residential uses but residential uses predominate. Businesses may be located in converted homes. Lots are generally small and ownership patterns may be fragmented. The MUR designation is also appropriate to provide a visual and functional transition between areas that are primarily commercial and areas that are primarily residential.

    b. Proximity to Services: Commercial services are very close and people can easily walk between residences and businesses. Generally this designation is appropriate for areas within 660 feet (one eighth of a mile) of a MUC designation.

    c. Critical Areas and Natural Hazards: Critical areas and natural hazards are either not present or are relatively insignificant. If critical areas are present, their functions and values have been significantly compromised by development. Development would not increase the risk from natural hazards.

    d. Public Facilities and Services: Emergency response times are average or better than average. Roads and utilities can either accommodate new development or the Public Facilities and Services Element identifies the improvements necessary to support higher density residential development and scattered commercial uses. Sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements are generally present in the surrounding area and transit service is within walking distance.

2. Permitted residential uses shall consist primarily of horizontally attached residential buildings, such as town homes, and duplexes, and small scale multiunit buildings, such as apartments or condominiums. Detached housing is generally not acceptable, but higher density forms of detached development, such as cottage housing and small lot divisions, may be permitted. Large multiunit residential buildings should not be permitted.

3. Commercial uses that generate limited traffic, pollution, or noise, and primarily operate during daytime hours, should be permitted. Examples of such uses include, but are not limited to; professional offices, personal services, craft industries, contractor offices, and storage yards. Small eating and drinking establishments, assembly uses, and public buildings may also be acceptable in limited circumstances. General retail sales, health care facilities, industrial uses, and other similar developments that generate large amounts of traffic, operate late at night, or are potentially hazardous to neighboring residential uses should be prohibited.

4. Street setbacks may vary depending on use, but a landscaped buffer should be provided between buildings and adjoining streets. The height, size, and bulk of non-residential buildings should be limited for compatibility with surrounding residential uses. Parking lots and outdoor storage areas should be screened from view and limited in size. Fencing should be wood, masonry, or security fencing with natural colored slats. Fences over six feet in height, barbed wire, razor wire, and electric fences are not appropriate. Small building mounted signs are appropriate.

5. The MUR designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the MUR-1 and MUR-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. MUR-1: Applied to areas that are predominantly residential in character. Scattered offices and professional services may be present. Outdoor storage yards, manufacturing areas, or buildings with a non-residential appearance are generally not present. Uses permitted in this zone should take place entirely indoors and should consist of small professional offices, home businesses, art galleries, and other similar uses.

    b. MUR-2: Uses are predominantly residential, but a significant number commercial or institutional uses exist. Outdoor storage yards, parking lots, and buildings with a non-residential appearance are present. Uses permitted in this zone may include contractor offices and storage yards, small scale craft manufacturing, larger professional offices, and businesses providing personal services.

2.5.4 Mixed Use Commercial (MUC): The MUC designation is the City's primary commercial land use designation. The goal of the MUC designation is to accommodate and promote a dense concentration of commercial, institutional, and residential uses. Uses in the MUC designation typically cover a large portion of the site, have high occupancy or employment densities, and generate significant customer traffic.

1. The following factors and characteristics shall be used to identify areas where an MUC designation may be appropriate:

    a. Existing Development Pattern: Existing development may consist of a mix of commercial and residential uses but is primarily, or exclusively, commercial. Areas with large undeveloped parcels along Burlington Boulevard, Fairhaven Avenue, or State Highway 20 may also be designed MUC. The MUC designation should not be applied to areas of existing development that are exclusively or primarily residential in character.

    b. Proximity to Services: Businesses are close to one another and people can walk between businesses, or between commercial and residential areas.

    c. Critical Areas and Natural Hazards: Critical areas and significant natural hazards are not present. If critical areas are present, their functions and values have been significantly compromised by development. Development would not increase the risk from natural hazards.

    d. Public Facilities and Services: Emergency response times are average or better than average. Roads and utilities can either accommodate new development or the Capital Facilities Element identifies the improvements necessary to support intensive commercial and residential development. Sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements are generally present and transit service is within walking distance. Areas that lack convenient access to an arterial or other high volume street should generally not be designated MUC.

2. Examples of acceptable uses include, but are not limited to, retail, commercial recreation, large multiunit residential developments, eating and drinking establishments, health care facilities, and office buildings. Industrial uses, warehouses, storage buildings, car dealerships, and other similar uses shall not be permitted.

3. Permitted uses should have the following characteristics:

    a. New development typically has higher floor area ratios and buildings should cover 25 percent or more of the site.

b. Merchandise is generally not displayed outdoors and most commercial activities take place indoors. Parking is secondary, incidental, and supportive of permitted uses.

c. Businesses tend to rely on, and generate, a high volume of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

d. A visually pleasing environment is required to attract customers and tenants.

4. Regulations should focus on creating a welcoming and visually pleasing environment that encourages recreational shopping and fosters a high level of social interaction. Intersection spacing should be minimized to create a dense, well connected street grid that efficiently moves vehicles and pedestrians. Signage should be unobtrusive, attached to buildings, or ground oriented. Electronic, flashing, or moving motions signs should be prohibited. Garbage and recycling receptacles should be screened from view. Fencing visible from a public street should be consistent with types commonly found commercial areas. Barbed wire, electric fences, razor wire, and fences over six feet in height are not acceptable.

5. The MUC designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the MUC-1 and MUC-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. MUC-1: This designation is applied to the commercial portions of the Downtown Planning Area and may also be applied to existing or planned neighborhood business centers. The overall purpose of this zone is to permit a range of smaller scale commercial and service uses. Residential development is also appropriate, including duplexes, townhomes, and smaller multiunit buildings. The scale and mass of new buildings in this zone should be limited to maintain a traditional main street or neighborhood business district appearance.

    b. MUC-2: This designation is applied to the Commercial Core and Northern Gateway planning areas and may also be applied to other existing or planned commercial areas. The MUC designation shall not be applied within the Downtown planning area. The overall purpose of this zone is to permit a range of higher intensity commercial uses and services. Large scale multiunit residential development is also appropriate. This zone is intended to accommodate the largest commercial, mixed-use, and residential buildings in the City.

2.5.5 Commercial Industrial (CI): The purpose of the CI designation is to accommodate uses involving outdoor sales, storage, manufacturing, noxious odors, loud noises, or heavy truck traffic. The uses permitted in this designation include those that are incompatible with residential uses and discourage pedestrian traffic.

1. The following factors and characteristics shall be used to identify areas where the CI designation may be appropriate:

    a. Existing Development Pattern: Existing land uses include car dealers, equipment sales, storage, manufacturing, and other similar uses. The area is adjacent to a rail line, or has good freeway access and residential and commercial uses are generally not present. If undeveloped the area is comprised of large parcels free of incompatible uses.

    b. Proximity to Services: Businesses are not necessarily close to one another and may be separated by large parking areas, storage yards, or buildings with blank walls. Walking between businesses would be difficult or impractical. Freeways and rail lines may be nearby and may act as barriers to pedestrians or prevent direct vehicle connections with the rest of the City.

    c. Critical Areas and Natural Hazards: Critical areas and natural hazards are either not present or are relatively insignificant. If the area has already been developed the existing environmental constraints have been significantly modified. Industrial development would not increase natural hazard risks or further degrade the functions and values of critical areas.

    d. Public Facilities and Services: Emergency response times are average. Good access to freeways and rail lines exists and roads can handle heavy truck traffic without contributing to congestion in the City's commercial areas. Sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements may not be present or may be limited in nature. Transit service may not be present and commercial services may be difficult for pedestrians to access.

    e. Special Planning Areas: The CI designation should be applied to the North and South Burlington Industrial areas and the Westside Freeway Sales area.

2. Examples of acceptable uses include, but are not limited to: car dealers, equipment sales, outdoor storage, warehousing, and industrial uses. Uses that could interfere with, or be negatively impacted by these uses, such as housing development or health care facilities, should not be permitted.

3. Regulations should focus on mitigating the visual impacts of large parking areas, outdoor storage areas, and industrial uses. Lighting, noise, and odor impacts should be minimized. Large freeway oriented signage is appropriate and electronic signs may be permitted in limited circumstances. Security fencing may be used, but electric fences are not acceptable and fencing over six feet in height should only be permitted conditionally.

4. The CI designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the CI-1 and CI-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. CI-1: Applied to areas with good freeway access and visibility where existing or intended pattern of development is characterized by car dealerships, recreational vehicles sales, equipment sales, light industrial buildings, storage facilities, and other similar uses. This designation should be applied to Westside Freeway Sales planning area and the portions of the North Burlington Industrial Areas that parallel the I-5 freeway. Generally outdoor manufacturing and land uses involving noxious emissions or loud consistent noise emissions are not permitted in this zone.

    b. CI-2: Applied to existing industrial areas along the north-south rail corridor. This designation should primarily be applied to the North and South Burlington Industrial Areas but may be applied to other existing industrial areas where appropriate. This designation is intended to accommodate uses involving outdoor manufacturing activities, intensive nighttime operations, and land uses involving noxious emissions or loud consistent noise emissions. Uses that could interfere with, or be negatively impacted by, common industrial uses and manufacturing processes, such as hotels, housing, nursing homes, public schools, eating and drinking establishments, or general retail, should be prohibited or discouraged.

2.5.6 Parks and Conservation (PC): The Parks and Conservation designation shall be applied to publicly owned parks, recreation facilities, and conservation sites. This designation may also be applied to privately owned land when significant critical area constraints are present or where development is limited by easements, covenants, or restrictive plat notes.

1. All publicly owned parks, recreational facilities, and conservation sites shall be designated PC. Privately owned land may also be designated PC in the following circumstances:

    a. The land is constrained by severe natural hazards or critical areas that render development extremely hazardous or infeasible; or

    b. Development is restricted by a conservation or open space easement, or by restrictive plat notes or designations.

2. Appropriate uses in the PC designation include sports fields, recreation facilities, picnic areas, trails, environmental conservation and restoration sites, publicly owned assembly uses, and flood control improvements. Major utilities, high capacity transportation routes, housing, industrial, commercial development should be prohibited. When the PC designation is applied to privately owned land detached homes on existing lots, agriculture, and forestry should be permitted.

3. The PC designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the PC-1 and PC-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. PC-1: This zoning designation should be used for environmentally sensitive areas and conservation sites. Generally only environmental restoration, passive recreation, and natural storm-water management or flood control measures should be permitted in this zoning designation.

    b. PC-2: The PC-2 zoning designation is intended to accommodate more intensive open recreational uses than those permitted in the PC-1 zone. It is also intended to accommodate structural flood control measures such as levees, pump stations, and utility outfalls. The PC-2 zoning designation should be applied parks and open space areas where active recreation, athletic fields, and other similar uses will not pose a hazard, significantly impact critical areas, or compromise flood control and storm-water management measures.

2.5.7 Public Facilities and Transportation (PFT): The PFT designation is intended to accommodate a broad range of public facilities, buildings, utilities, and infrastructure.

1. All land owned or controlled by a public agency or government, other than land designated PC, shall be designated PFT. Private land within a railroad or utility right-of-way should also be designated PFT.

2. Local and regional transportation routes, utilities, public buildings and facilities, railroads and other similar uses should be permitted in the PFT designation.

4. The PFT designation shall be implemented by, and exclusively associated with, the PFT-1 and PFT-2 zoning designations. The following policies shall guide the application of these zoning designations:

    a. PFT-1: Applied wherever public facilities are required to support growth and development. This zone is intended to accommodate facilities with a commercial or institutional character, such as schools, fire stations, public buildings, emergency shelters, and publicly supported housing. Small scale utilities and transportation facilities that serve a local need and support permitted development in the surrounding area, such as streets, storm-water improvements, sewer lines, pump stations, and power lines are also appropriate.

    b. PFT-2: Applied to existing public facilities that have an industrial character, such as sewage treatment plants, equipment storage yards, rail lines, freeways, transmission lines, substations, and high capacity pipelines. The PFT-2

designation may also be assigned to other areas as part of an essential public facilities designation process.

2.5.8 Urban Holding (UH): The UH designation applies to the unincorporated areas of the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA) and is intended to ensure annexation and the provision of public services occurs in an orderly, cost effective, and contiguous fashion. For long range planning purposes other comprehensive plan designations may be applied to the unincorporated UGA. In such cases the UH designation shall function as an overlay and shall be lifted upon annexation. Under no circumstances shall Skagit County issue permits or otherwise authorize development in violation of these policies.

1. All land outside the City's municipal boundaries but within the City's UGA shall be designated UH.

2. The zoning map may identify zoning designations for land in the unincorporated UGA and these designations shall become effective upon annexation.

3. Permitted uses in the UH designation shall be limited to agriculture, detached homes on existing lots, utilities, public facilities, flood control improvements, and conservation or environmental restoration projects.

4. When land is annexed the UH overlay designation shall be removed and the underlying comprehensive plan or zoning designations shall apply.

5. Annexation shall not occur until comprehensive plan and zoning designations have been assigned to the land being annexed.

6. Open space, agricultural, and resource land impacts associated with developing land outside the City should be mitigated through the application of the City's conservation futures program.

7. Sewer service will only be extended after, or in concurrently with, annexation. Septic systems may be permitted as an interim measure to serve rural development. Properties that are continuous to the City's municipal boundaries and within 200 feet of a sewer line shall be required to annex to the City and connect to the municipal sewer system as a condition of development or when a septic failure occurs.

2.6 Priority Development Areas

Three Priority Development Areas have been established in the City's most intensively and centralized locations. The policies in this section are broadly intended to create a highly accessible environment with a mix of housing, jobs, shopping, and services. The three Priority Development Areas listed in this section are intended to accommodate the majority of the City's future residential and commercial growth. The Priority Development Areas overlays and the policies in this section shall apply in addition to the policies of the underlying land use designation. Policies have been adopted for each Priority Development Area to reflect their unique characteristics, needs, and purpose.

2.6.1 Downtown

A growth area encompasses the City's historic downtown business district and surrounding neighborhoods. The Downtown growth area is intended to protect the appearance and character of the City's historic center. The Downtown growth area includes both commercial and residential areas. The commercial area is centered along Fairhaven Avenue and is characterized by a traditional main street appearance. Smaller buildings without setbacks form a uniform building line along the street. Parking lots are uncommon and are generally located behind buildings. Businesses tend to rely heavily on pedestrian traffic and walk up customers. The residential neighborhoods surrounding the commercial area are characterized by smaller lots and a mix of attached and detached buildings. The following policies are intended to maintain and reinforce this pattern of development:

1. In areas designated MUC, new buildings, and additions to existing buildings, should be oriented to establish a uniform building line and should generally be built up to the sidewalk edge. Entrances should face the street and windows should be provided along street frontages to avoid creating blank walls. Landscaping along street frontages should reflect a traditional urban appearance and should consist of raised planters, street trees, and landscaped planting strips and curb bulbs. Signage should be attached to buildings. Electronic signs, moving motion signs, or signs with changeable images are not appropriate anywhere in the downtown special planning area.

2. In areas designated MUC, ground floor uses along Fairhaven Avenue should be limited to active pedestrian oriented uses such as eating and drinking establishments, retail, personal services, indoor showrooms, and government offices with a customer service function. Administrative offices, medical facilities, and residential uses should not be permitted on the ground floor.

3. In residential areas, building types should primarily consist of horizontally attached housing, small multiunit buildings, single family homes on small lots, and cottage housing. In these areas buildings should be setback from the street. A uniform landscaped buffer should be provided between the building line and the street. Access should be provided from an alley whenever possible and parking lots or service areas should be located behind buildings and

screened from view. Multiunit buildings with more than eight dwelling units and non-residential buildings with a footprint greater than 10,000 square feet are generally not appropriate any may only be permitted through a conditional use permit process.

4. Parking should be provided in the form of on-street spaces and shared public parking lots. Large private parking lots should be discouraged.

5. The historic development pattern and street networks should be maintained. Blocks lengths and intersection spacing should not exceed 300 feet and alley access should be provided for new development. Streets should generally include no more than one travel lane in each direction and parking and sidewalks should be provided along both sides of the street.

6. Land within the Downtown growth area should be designated MUR, MUC, RA, or PFT.

2.6.4 Northern Gateway

The area along Burlington Boulevard from West Victoria Avenue to the I-5 interchange at Fountain Street is characterized by a mix of public uses including, public schools and a transit center. A landscaped median prevents left turns in most locations and two traffic circles provide access to cross streets and the I-5 interchange. While these traffic controls provide good access to the Burlington Boulevard corridor, they also pose a challenge for retail and service uses. However, the concentration of public services, proximity to downtown Burlington, and transit access make the Northern Gateway an excellent location for multiunit housing. The following policies shall apply to the Northern Gateway growth area:

1. In addition to any uses permitted by the underlying Comprehensive Plan designations, schools, parks, transit centers, and larger scale multiunit residential developments shall be considered permitted uses in the Northern Gateway. Single purpose residential development is acceptable and may be permitted along all street frontages.

2. Signage, landscaping, design regulations, and public improvements shall reflect the prominence and importance of this planning area.

3. Development and public improvements should emphasize the status and importance of the Northern Gateway as a key entrance to the City and a home to important civil functions, such as the Burlington Edison High School.

4. Uses with an industrial character or uses involving outdoor storage, sales, or material processing shall be prohibited.

2.6.5 Commercial Core

The Commercial Core is the City's primary commercial center. The Commercial Core is centered along the Burlington Boulevard corridor and contains regionally significant shopping, entertainment, and services. While this area has historically been primarily, or exclusively,

commercial in nature, this plan envisions directing a significant portion of the City's future residential growth to the Commercial Core. The purpose of the Commercial Core growth area is to maintain the viability and prominence of the City's retail base while accommodating redevelopment and infill that is compatible with, and supports, existing developments and uses.

1. In areas designated MUC, ground floor uses along Burlington Boulevard should be limited to active pedestrian oriented uses such as eating and drinking establishments, retail, personal services, indoor showrooms, and government offices with a customer service function. Administrative offices, medical facilities, social service agencies, and residential uses are not acceptable.

2. With the exception of land designated Parks and Conservation (PC), or Public Facilities and Transportation (PFT), all land in the Commercial Core shall be designated Mixed Use Commercial (MUC).

2.7 Special Development Areas

2.7.1 Westside Freeway Sales

The Westside Freeways Sales SDA contains a large concentration of businesses selling cars, recreational vehicles, and equipment. This area has good freeway access and visibility but is functionally separated from the rest of the City and the Commercial Core by the I-5 freeway. Car dealerships and other similar uses will continue to be encouraged in this planning area and discouraged elsewhere.

1. The Westside Freeways Sales SDA is exclusively associated with the CI Comprehensive Plan Map designation and is intended to be zoned CI-1.

2. Maintain large blocks of land suitable for car dealerships, large format retailers, and other similar uses.

3. Mitigate the negative impacts associated with outdoors sales uses through landscaping, site planning, lighting regulations, and low impact development measures.

4. Create dramatic and highly visible building frontages along I-5 and Goldenrod Road. Buildings should be located close to freeway and arterial street frontages and should include strong vertical design elements and other distinguishing features such as large indoor display windows. Parking, uncovered storage, and outdoor sales areas should be located alongside, between, or behind buildings. Landscaping and site grading may be designed to create highly visible display areas while minimizing the visual impacts and storm-water runoff.

5. The Westside Freeway Sales SDA is primarily intended to accommodate outdoor sales uses, such as car dealerships, and large format retailers. Other light auto-oriented and light industrial uses, such as contractor offices, gas stations, car washes, and storage buildings are also acceptable, particularly on smaller lots or in less visually prominent locations. Other that may interfere with, or be negatively impacted by, the primary uses should be restricted or prohibited. Apartments, hotels, and similar uses should be limited to sites that lack freeway or arterial street frontage.

2.7.2 North and South Burlington Industrial

The City's primary industrial areas are centered along the north-south BNSF rail line. Two large concentrations of industrial uses are located north of Burlington Hill and in the southeast corner of the City. The North and South Burlington Industrial areas have been established in recognition of this concentration of this concentration of industrial land. In order to prevent the incursion of incompatible uses and to maintain a sufficiently supply of land to accommodate future industrial development, the size of these growth areas shall not be reduced and they shall be exclusively associated with the CI Comprehensive Plan designation.

2.7.3 Western Gateway

A growth area has been designated at the west entrance to the City along State Route 20. This area is intended to provide convenience services to the surrounding residential areas and provide a location for traveler oriented businesses such as gas stations, car washes, and hotels.

1. Create a dramatic entrance to the City that emphasizes a clear transition between the City and surrounding rural areas.

2. Provide convenient opportunities for shoppers and travelers to stop as enter or pass through Burlington.

3. Provide convenience services to surrounding residential areas that would otherwise be cut off from the rest of the City by I-5.

3 Housing

3.1 Introduction

The Housing Element describes what type, and how much, housing will be needed in the future. The Housing Element is intended to ensure the City has an adequate supply of safe, healthy, and affordable housing in convenient locations.

There are many different types of households including, singles, couples with children, and extended families. Some households are comprised of related family members and some are not. Not every household wants, needs, or can afford the same type of housing. While smaller homes may be attractive to singles or childless couples, they may be unsuitable for families with children. Some households may be able to afford a detached home on a large lot, while others may struggle to afford a modest apartment. No single type of housing meets the needs of all households. The Housing Element is intended to facilitate the provision of a variety of housing types suitable for various ages, family types, incomes levels, and lifestyle preferences.

The primary objectives of the Housing Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Adapting to changing conditions.** Accommodate a robust supply of housing in a variety of types. At a minimum, the City will accommodate the construction of 1,448 housing units, of which 60 percent will be attached and 40 percent will be detached. The needs of the elderly and extended families will be addressed by allowing people to use their homes flexibly through the construction of accessory dwellings.

- **Maintaining housing affordability.** Limit monthly household expenses related to transportation, utilities, and taxes by concentrating housing in locations close to jobs, services, shopping, and in areas with established utilities. Enable the production of a robust supply of market rate housing and support the efforts of organizations that provide income assistance and subsidized housing.

- **Ensure housing is safe and healthy.** Uniformly enforce building, fire, and property maintenance codes and regularly inspect places of public accommodation.

3.2 Requirements

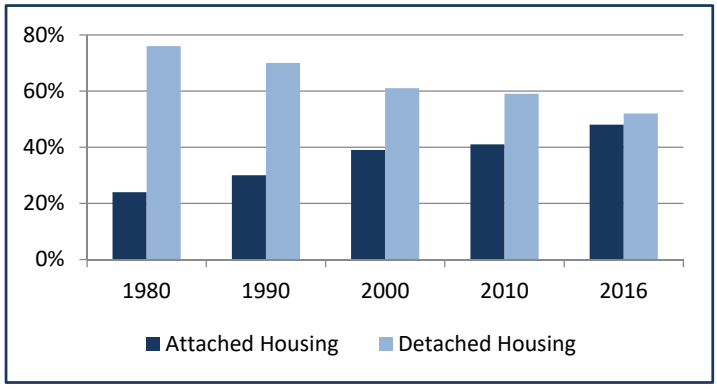
The City is required by the GMA to demonstrate, based on its planning policies and zoning regulations that sufficient land exists to accommodate 20 years of population growth. The housing element must provide an inventory of existing housing and analyze the City's future housing needs. Specifically the housing element must show how, and where, a variety of

housing types and densities will be accommodated; including multiunit buildings, detached houses, accessory dwelling units, group homes, manufactured housing, foster care facilities, and subsidized housing for low income households.

One of the goals of the GMA is to encourage the availability of affordable housing for all economic segments of the community, promote a variety of housing types and densities, and to encourage the preservation of existing housing. Importantly the GMA does not require that housing be provided, or guarantee a specific outcome; instead, local governments are required to ensure planning policies and regulations do not prevent private, non-profit, or public housing developers from constructing needed housing.

3.3 Demand and Capacity

3.3.1 Current Conditions



In the year 2016 the City of Burlington had a total of 3,666 housing units. Approximately 1,747 (48 percent) of these units are attached buildings, such as duplexes and apartments, and 1,919 (52 percent) are detached dwellings. The percentage of attached housing has steadily increased over the past three decades, rising from 24 percent in 1980, to 48 percent in 2016. Notably, the City of Burlington has more attached housing than any other city in Skagit County.

Table 3.1 Housing Types – Change Over Time

	1980[1]	1990[2]	2000[3]	2010[4]	2016[5]
Attached*	24%	30%	39%	41%	48%
Detached*	76%	70%	61%	59%	52%

Sources: (1) Office of Financial Management (OFM) post-censal estimates of April 1st housing units, 1980 and 1990 to present; (2) US Census, 1990; (3) US Census, 2000; (4) 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates; (5) Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) 2017 Housing Inventory and Transportation Analysis – based on Skagit County Assessor's data
Note: Housing data by unit type not available from consistent sources across years. SCOG data from 2017 is assumed to be the most accurate because it is based on building permits and a physical inventory as opposed to survey or occupant reported data.

Table 3.2 Housing Types – Other Cities

	Burlington[1]	Mount Vernon[1]	Sedro Woolley[1]	Anacortes[1][2]	Ferndale[2]	Bellingham[2]	Arlington[2]
Attached*	48%	30%	33%	8%[1] 21%[2]	27%	48%	30%
Detached*	52%	70%	67%	92%[1] 79%[2]	73%	52%	70%

**Attached housing includes any building that contains two or more dwelling units. Detached housing includes single family homes, manufactured homes, and trailers. (1) Source: Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) 2017 Housing Inventory and Transportation Analysis – based on Skagit County Assessor's data. (2) 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.*
Note: A significant divergence exists between SCOG and ACS data for Anacortes so data from both sources was included.

Burlington also has the highest concentration of "non-family" households in Skagit County. Non-family households include households comprised of singles, unmarried couples, and unrelated individuals living together. The percentage of non-family households increased from 34 percent in 2000 to 45 percent in 2016. Over the same period, the number of "family households", defined as a household comprised of two or more people who are either married or related, declined from 66 percent to 55 percent. In Burlington, most non-family households appear to be singles living alone. In fact, singles represent 36 percent of the City's households.

Age and family structure are also important considerations when assessing housing needs. In Burlington, 74 percent of households have no children. This percentage is significantly higher than in most other cities in Skagit County. For example, in Mount Vernon, 53 percent of households are childless. Only Anacortes, where 75 percent of households are childless, is comparable. In Anacortes this number can be explained by a comparatively large proportion of retirees. In Anacortes approximately 25 percent of the population is 65 or older, while in Burlington only 16 percent of the population falls into this category. A large percentage of Burlington's childless households are comprised of working age adults (25 to 44 years old).

Table 3.3 Household Size

	Burlington	Mount Vernon	Sedro Woolley	Anacortes	Ferndale	Bellingham	Arlington
1 person	36%	23%	26%	29%	34%	35%	28%
2 people	34%	34%	33%	42%	38%	35%	30%
3 people	10%	14%	15%	12%	12%	14%	15%
4+ people	20%	29%	26%	17%	16%	16%	27%

Table 3.4 Household with Children

	Burlington	Mount Vernon	Sedro Woolley	Anacortes	Ferndale	Bellingham	Arlington
Children	26%	47%	32%	25%	36%	22%	35%
No Children	74%	53%	68%	75%	64%	78%	65%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2016.

A conventional, and simplistic, method of measuring affordability states that a household spending more than 30 percent of its monthly income on housing is "cost burdened". Approximately 59 percent of the City's renters fall into this category. This is comparable to other cities in Skagit County and Whatcom County. Only Anacortes has a significantly smaller number of renter households considered cost burdened. Nationally it is thought that approximately 50 percent of renter households are cost burdened.

3.3.2 Future Needs

A large and growing percentage of the City's housing is attached. Singles, childless couples, and other non-family households represent an increasingly large share of the population. At the same time transportation costs have increased, rural development has become more difficult, and significant legal and environmental barriers exist to expanding urban growth areas. Consumer preferences have also changed. Increasingly buyers prefer central locations with convenient access to work, shopping, and entertainment. In 2016 attached housing comprised

48 percent of the City's housing stock and this percentage has increased by 10 percent each decade since 1980. If this trend continues, by 2036 more than 60 percent of the City's housing will be attached.

Although a significant portion the City's future housing will be provided in multiunit apartment and condominium buildings, a large number of duplexes and townhomes will also be required. Large households and families with children have unique needs including; access to outdoor space, adequate storage, additional bedrooms, and proximity to schools. Traditionally these households have favored detached homes. However, detached homes are increasingly unaffordable to those with modest incomes. An increasing number of horizontally attached housing options, such as townhomes and duplexes, will be required to meet the needs of families with children, who may not want, or be able to afford, a detached home. It's possible that as many as 170 townhomes and duplexes will be needed over the next 20 years.

Table 3.5 Future Housing Needs

Attached Housing	869 (60%)	**Multiunit Buildings**	652 (75%)
		Townhouses/Duplexes	174 (20%)
		ADU/Small Lot Housing	43 (5%)
Detached Housing	579 dwelling units (40%)		

3.3.3 Capacity

Sufficient capacity exists to accommodate approximately 2,031 additional housing units, including 883 attached units and 1,148 detached units. Manufactured homes are permitted throughout the RD designation and treated no differently than site built housing. Group homes and boarding houses are permitted in the RD, RA, and MUR designations. Subsidized, or income restricted, housing is treated no differently from other housing types.

Table 3.6 Residential Capacity Assumptions

Comprehensive Plan Designation	Attached Housing Units	Detached Housing Units	Total Housing Units	Population
RD - Residential Detached	40	1,148	1,188	3,124
RA – Residential Attached	567	None	567	1,491
MUR – Mixed-Use Residential				
MUC – Mixed-Use Commercial	1,468	None	1,468	3,861
CI – Commercial and Industrial	None	None	None	None
PC – Parks and Conservation	None	None	None	None
PFT – Public Facilities and Transportation	None	None	None	None
Total:	***2,075***	***1,148***	***3,223***	***8,476***

3.4 Housing Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies are intended to address the City' current and future housing needs. The bold headings below identify the City's housing goals and each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington and other government agencies shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

3.4.1 Population Growth: Burlington is surrounded by floodplains and valuable agricultural land. In order to protect these resources, minimize the amount of land exposed to flood hazards, and to achieve the GMA goal of reducing sprawl, all of the population growth allocated to Burlington will be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries.

1. When considering changes to the City's zoning and comprehensive plan maps the impact of the change on housing capacity shall be evaluated. Changes shall not prevent the City from meeting the housing production targets identified in this element. Under no circumstances shall the City's overall housing capacity be reduced below the level needed to accommodate 20 years of population growth.

2. The zoning and comprehensive plan maps shall identify a sufficient quantity of land to accommodate the construction of at least 869 attached dwelling units and 579 detached dwelling units.

3. Direct a significant share of the City's future population growth to the Northern Gateway, Commercial Core, and Downtown Priority Development Areas (PDAs). Encourage large scale multiunit buildings in the Northern Gateway and Commercial Core PDAs and smaller scale infill projects in the Downtown PDA.

4. The population capacity of detached residential areas should be gradually increased through small scale infill projects including; accessory dwelling units, guest homes, small lot land divisions, cottage housing, and duplexes on corner lots. Duplexes on interior lots, townhomes, small multi-unit buildings and similar types of housing should also be allowed in these areas as part of a cluster development or through a conditional use permit process, particularly in locations with good access to schools, parks, and services.

3.4.2 Small Households: Approximately 70 percent of the City's households are occupied by one or two people and 74 percent of the City's households are childless. These numbers are expected to remain steady or increase over the next 20 years. In order to accommodate these demographic changes, an increasing number of small housing units will be required. By 2036 the percentage of attached housing will be increased from 48 percent to at least 60 percent and at least 869 attached dwelling units will be constructed.

1. Increase the capacity of the City's attached residential and mixed use areas by adopting setback, parking, design, and density regulations that allow land to be used more efficiently. These regulations should focus on the size, mass, and street orientation of buildings. Explicit density limits should be avoided and used only when necessary to address infrastructure constraints.

2. In mixed use areas the use of shared parking, or other flexible parking arrangements, shall be encouraged.

3. Stand-alone residential development should be permitted in the Northern Gateway.

4. Parking and onsite amenity requirements should be consistent with current planning practices and the standards used by other jurisdictions. Factors such as car ownership rates, transit service, and proximity to services should be considered when evaluating parking requirements.

5. Impact fees shall be calculated to accurately capture the impact of smaller residential units.

3.4.3 Family Housing: The City's current housing stock is bifurcated between large detached homes and small apartment units. This creates a problem for families with children and modest incomes. Large detached homes are increasingly unaffordable while apartments in multiunit buildings may be unsuitable for children. The production of duplexes, townhomes, and small lot housing will be increased to address this imbalance. Approximately 12 percent of the City's future housing units will be horizontally attached units, such as duplexes or townhomes, and at least 174 horizontally attached units will be constructed.

1. Permit a range of affordable housing types suitable for families in the MUR and RA designations such as townhomes, duplexes, small lot land divisions, cottage housing, and small multiunit buildings.

2. Permit duplexes on corner lots in the RD designation.

3. Townhomes and other horizontally attached housing types may be permitted in the RD designation as part of a cluster development or through a conditional use permit process that ensures visual compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Special consideration should be given to authorizing the construction of townhomes or duplexes in areas that are within walking distance of schools and parks.

4. Encourage the construction of affordable housing types suitable for families with children such as townhomes, duplexes, and horizontally attached dwellings. At a minimum, a sufficient quantity of land shall be provided to permit the construction of 174 units of horizontally attached housing, such as duplexes and townhomes.

3.4.4 Homelessness: Homelessness has many causes including expensive housing, poverty, substance abuse, and mental illness. The overall prevalence of homelessness in the City will be reduced and the number of formerly homeless individuals transitioning to permanent housing will be increased. The City of Burlington, and the other cities in Skagit County, will each take steps to facilitate the construction of a robust supply of shelter housing, transitional housing, and permanent affordable housing.

1. Support programs, developments, and actions that prioritize the most pressing needs and create a pathway to permanent housing, including the rapid construction of emergency (shelter) housing, transitional housing, and permanent affordable housing.

2. Support the efforts of organizations working to address the underlying causes of homelessness including mental illness, substance abuse, and poverty. Priority should be given to supporting programs and actions that address the following needs:

    a. Housing;

    b. Employment and income stability;

    c. Access to healthcare, including treatment for mental illness and addiction;

    d. Regional coordination and evidence based solutions.

3. Permit overnight shelters operated by non-profit or religious organizations on a seasonal or temporary basis. Shelters should be considered a temporary or emergency measure, rather than a permanent solution to homelessness. Shelters shall be located indoors and shall be inspected for compliance with basic fire and life safety standards. The City favors long-term, permanent solutions over short-term transitory investments.

4. Permanent housing for formerly homeless individuals shall be treated no differently from other forms of permanent housing.

5. Develop a regional approach to affordable housing and homelessness, including the establishment of binding regional agreements on spending priorities, project locations, allocation of funding, and regulatory requirements.

3.4.5 Nontraditional Households: The number of elderly, retirees, and multigenerational households is expected to increase. Much of the City's existing housing stock is poorly suited to the needs of these groups. Often adaptations that might help meet the needs of extended families, such as accessory dwelling units, guest houses, and basement apartments are prohibited. The production of accessory dwelling units, guest houses, and small lot developments will be increased to account for at least five percent of the City's housing production.

1. Accessory dwelling units shall be permitted in the RD designation and steps shall be taken to minimize the cost and complexity of obtaining a permit to construct one.

2. Small lot developments and cottage housing shall be permitted in the RD, RA, and MUR designations.

3. Continue to allow group homes, boarding houses, and other forms of congregate housing in the RD, RA, and MUR designations.

4. Duplexes, townhomes, and small multiunit buildings should be permitted in the RD designation as part of a cluster development or through a conditional use permit process that ensures visual compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

5. Develop a program that encourages the owners of illegal or unpermitted ADUs to bring units into compliance with building, fire, and safety requirements.

3.4.6 Safe and Healthy Housing. Burlington takes the health and safety of its residents very seriously. The number of health and safety violations will be reduced by uniform application and enforcement of the City's building, fire, property maintenance, and zoning codes.

1. All new housing units shall comply with the City's building and fire code requirements and existing residences shall be maintained consistent with the City's property maintenance codes and zoning regulations.

2. Overnight accommodations, such as hotels, shall not be used for permanent habitation, must comply with the City's overnight accommodation regulations, and should be inspected annually for compliance with applicable regulations.

3. Rental units shall comply with all applicable building, health, and safety requirements and violations shall be addressed promptly.

4. Fire and building safety standards shall be applied equally without regard to social status or income. The City will not support the use of tents, encampments, or recreational vehicles as places of permanent habitation unless otherwise required by law.

5. Rental units shall be have functioning sewer and water service, be provided with waste collection, and be free of mold, mildew, chemical and biological hazards, and insect or rodent infestation.

6. Property owners shall not discriminate or retaliate against tenants who report violations of the City's building, fire, zoning, or property maintenance codes.

3.4.7 Affordable Housing. The housing needs of all economic segments of the population will be addressed by ensuring the City's planning policies and development regulations allow for a robust supply of all types of housing. The City will also work with, and support, organizations that provide assistance to those who cannot afford market rate housing.

1. Minimize the cost of market rate housing by ensuring that planning policies and development regulations permit an adequate supply of attached housing, accessory dwelling units, and small lot housing.

2. Encourage non-profit organizations, religious institutions, and government agencies to make land available for the development of subsidized or income restricted housing, particularly for populations with special needs, such as veterans, the disabled, and families with children.

3. Support efforts to address housing affordability on a regional basis.

4. Support innovative approaches to housing affordability. Give priority to supporting programs and actions that:

    a. Serve the greatest number of people, or provide the largest number of housing units, at the lowest cost;

    b. Address the most pressing housing needs first;

    c. Leverage private sector investment and efficiencies when possible;

    d. Utilize unconstrained or flexible funding sources;

    e. Provide good access to jobs, services, and transportation.

5. Consider establishing a development fee waiver program to encourage the development of subsidized or income restricted housing.

6. Periodically evaluate permit and impact fees to ensure fees accurately reflect the true cost of providing services. The effect of permit and impact fees on the production of affordable housing should also be evaluated.

7. Publicly funded or subsidized housing should be located in close proximity to jobs, services, and public transportation. Discourage the creation of subsidized housing in remote or peripheral locations.

8. To minimize private transportation expenses, adopt policies and regulations that facilitate and promote the construction of attached housing in areas with a dense concentration of jobs and services, particularly the Commercial Core.

3.4.8 Monitoring. The quantity and quality of information available to inform housing policies and regulations will be continuously improved. The City will annually monitor the number, type density, and location of completed housing units and will annually compile and report the results.

4 Natural Resources

4.1 Introduction

This element describes how the City will manage its natural resources. It is intended to protect people from natural hazards, such as floods, earthquakes, and landslides, and protect environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat. This element also shows how development will be managed to control storm-water runoff and protect water quality.

Development has significantly altered the City's natural environment. Open areas have been paved, wetlands have been filled or drained, much of the City's original forest cover has been lost, and dams and flood control projects have eliminated minor seasonal flooding. While development has provided housing and jobs for the City's residents, it has also displaced wildlife habitat, exposed people to hazardous conditions, and led to water quality and storm-water management problems. However, by changing the way the City develops, growth can be accommodated without putting people at risk or harming the environment.

That Natural Resources Element is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- **Limit Exposure to Natural Hazards.** Development will be limited, or directed away from, areas with severe or widespread natural hazards, such as Burlington Hill, the Skagit River corridor, and Gages Slough. New buildings and developments will be designed and constructed to reduce the risk of damage, injuries, or loss of life in the event of a natural disaster, and growth will be accommodated through infill and redevelopment rather than expanding into undeveloped floodplain areas.

- **Maintain or Restore Natural Hydrologic Functions.** Storm-water from new development will be managed using techniques that maintain or restore natural hydrologic processes. New impervious surface coverage will be limited, developments will includes features such as s rain gardens and permeable pavement, and wetlands, water courses, and drainage areas will be maintained or restored.

- **Preserve Existing Habitat Blocks and Corridors.** Much the City has been extensively developed but a number of important habitat features remain, including Gages Slough, Burlington Hill, and the Skagit River Corridor. Development in these areas will be limited, the use of clustered development patterns will be required and the City will acquire public land or easements for projects that improve fish and wildlife habitat and water quality.

4.2 Requirements

The City is required by the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) to regulate development in hazardous or environmentally sensitive areas. These areas are known as "critical areas" and include:

- Wetlands
- Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Floodplains
- Geologic Hazards

Critical area policies and regulations must be based on scientifically valid and up-to-date information. This information is referred to as "best available science" (BAS). A complete report describing the condition of critical areas in Burlington and summarizing applicable scientific information is included in Volume II.

The protection of water resources is a central component of the GMA. Goal ten of the GMA requires local governments to "protect and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air, and water quality, and the availability of water". Also, the land use element of a local government's comprehensive plan must "review drainage, flooding, storm-water run-off in the area and nearby jurisdictions and provide guidance for corrective actions to mitigate or cleanse those discharges that pollute waters of the state, including Puget Sound or waters entering Puget Sound.

In addition the City is subject to numerous state and federal laws related to water quality. The City's storm-water discharges are regulated by a "National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System" (NPDES) permit issued by the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). NPDES permits are intended to implement, and ensure compliance with, state and federal water quality laws. The City's NPDES permit includes specific conditions which dictate how Burlington manages storm-water and regulates development.

To comply with the conditions of the NPDES permit storm-water runoff must be managed in accordance with the "Storm-water Manual for Western Washington" published by DOE. All new development in the City is subject to the requirements outlined in the DOE manual. In addition, all new development is required to include "Low Impact Development" (LID) techniques. LID is a form of development that minimizes storm-water runoff by reducing impervious surface coverage and increasing the amount of water infiltrated on-site. The overall objective of LID is to more closely mimic natural drainage conditions and reduce the amount of storm-water generated by new development.

Floodplain development in the City of Burlington is subject to a number of regulatory requirements, including the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Washington State

floodplain management laws, the Growth Management Act (GMA), and the Shoreline Management Act (SMA). These regulatory programs address where development can occur in the floodplain, what type of floodplain development is appropriate, and specify construction techniques and building design standards. Broadly, these regulations are intended to minimize flood damage and property loss, protect lives, and maintain the natural functions of the floodplain.

The GMA requires that "frequently flooded areas" be designated as critical areas. Importantly, the GMA definition of a frequently flooded area is broader than the term "floodplain" which is used by the NFIP. Under the GMA, frequently flooded areas included not only mapped floodplains, but also unmapped areas that may be at risk of localized flooding due to high ground water, wetlands, streams, and urban storm-water runoff. The GMA requires that local governments take actions to minimize public health and safety risks, reduce economic losses, and protect natural floodplain functions. The State's platting and land division laws also require that flood hazards be considered in approving new subdivisions and short plats.

4.3 Current and Future Conditions

4.3.1 Wetlands

Given its small size and well drained soils Burlington has a limited number of wetlands. However, the City is bisected by a Gages Slough, a large linear complex of wetlands. Wetlands are also located around the base of Burlington Hill and near the south end of Walnut Street. Other small, unmapped wetlands exist throughout the City. These wetlands provide important habitat, flood storage capacity, and storm-water management functions. Given the City's flooding and storm-water management challenges, this plan strongly emphasizes the preservation and restoration of wetland areas.

4.3.2 Water Quality

Burlington is characterized by flat terrain, flood hazards, and shallow groundwater. Because of these conditions, effectively managing surface and groundwater has been a significant issue throughout the City's history. The development of much of the City would not have been possible without the construction of drainage and flood control improvements. Unfortunately, historic development patterns and inadequate storm-water management measures have also led to water quality problems and caused localized flooding.

A large concentration of potential sources of water contamination exist in the City, including underground storage tanks, industrial uses, and sites that handle or generate hazardous waste. These uses, coupled with the permeable soils and shallow groundwater found throughout the City, pose a significant risk of groundwater contamination. Storm-water carries pollutants from roads, parking lots, industrial uses, and other developments to Gages Slough and the Skagit River, making property storm-water management imperative. Due to historic development

practices buildings and pavement cover much of the City and depressions, water courses, and wetlands have been filled. As a result, localized flooding can occur during storm events and wetland and water courses dry up during summer months.

4.3.3 Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Most of Burlington is extensively developed and very few areas of native vegetation or habitat exist. Many of the city's remaining open space areas are used as parks or have been heavily modified by past agricultural uses and flood control improvements. The City does have several notable habitat features, and development within the City has the potential to indirectly impact threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

The City's southern limit is defined by the Skagit River. The Skagit River supports all six species of pacific Salmon and Steelhead, several of which are listed as endangered. Other water bodies also exist which are either modeled as potential salmon habitat or have documented salmon occurrences including Joe Leary Slough and Gages Slough. Two other notable areas provide locally important habitat features. Gages Slough provides a continuous band of habitat for waterfowl and other birds and connects undeveloped areas to the east and west of the City. Burlington Hill also provides locally important habitat functions. It represents the largest remaining stand of forest in the City and contains rocky outcrops, downed trees, snags, and unique geologic conditions.

4.3.4 Flood Hazards

Flooding has historically played a major role in the development of Burlington and much of the Skagit Valley. With the exception of a few isolated areas, the entire city is located in a floodplain. While flooding poses significant risks, it has also been responsible for the Skagit Valley's unique pattern of development and strong agricultural industry.

Under natural conditions floodplains are frequently inundated and receding low velocity floodwaters leave behind sediment and nutrients. This naturally occurring cycle is responsible for the incredibly productive soils found in the Skagit Valley. Through the construction of dams, dikes, and drainage improvements, periodic flooding that was once a seasonal occurrence has been largely eliminated.

Despite the significant efforts made to control flooding in the Skagit River watershed, the possibility of major flooding in the City of Burlington is not remote and the risk of a major flood occurring is expected to increase, rather than decrease, over time. The Skagit River has flooded more than 60 times in the past century and the frequency and magnitude of flooding in the Skagit Valley is increasing. In the past, growth would have been accommodated by physically expanding the City and constructing new dikes or levees. However, the financial implications and environmental consequences of this pattern of development have become untenable.

4.3.5 Geologic Hazards

The City of Burlington, like much of the Skagit Valley, is characterized by extremely flat terrain. One notable exception is Burlington Hill, a steep rocky landform rising to an elevation of more than 400 feet. The soils on Burlington Hill are prone to erosion, and rock formations present numerous design and construction challenges. The City is also at risk from seismic activity and volcanic eruptions. Soils found throughout the City are prone to liquefaction, earth spreading and subsidence. The City could also be impacted by debris flows in the event of an eruption of Mount Baker or Glacier Peak.

4.4 Goals and Policies

The goals and policies in this section are intended to reduce the risk of natural hazards and protect the functions and values of the City's environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources. The bold headings below identify the City's Natural Resource goals and each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington and other government agencies shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

4.4.1 Wetlands: Wetlands provide important water quality, habitat, storm-water management, and flood control benefits. The functions and values of wetlands will be maintained or enhanced, there will be no net loss of wetlands, and additional wetland areas will be created to manage storm-water and control localized flooding.

1. Wetlands shall be identified, delineated, and rated in accordance with Washington State Department of Ecology regulations and guidelines.

2. Off-site wetland mitigation banks will only be used for essential public facilities that cannot be accommodated any other way, and then only when it can be shown that sufficient mitigation opportunities do not exist within the City.

3. Wetland reports and mitigation plans shall also address flood storage, storm-water, and floodplain habitat functions consistent with FEMA Region 10 guidelines and the National Marine Fisheries Service Biological Opinion.

4. Maintain a map of wetland areas and continually update the map as new delineations are completed.

5. City owned property containing wetlands or wetland buffers should not be sold or transferred except for purposes of conservation or environmental restoration.

6. Prioritize the acquisition of land or easements along the Gages Slough corridor and promote projects that improve wetland functions and values, water quality, and increase storm and flood water storage capacity.

4.4.3 Natural Hydrologic Processes: Natural hydrologic processes, including infiltration and the subsurface movement of water, minimize erosion, surface water contamination, and regulate seasonal discharges. These natural functions support salmon habitat, reduce the risk of localized flooding, and reduce the need for costly structural storm-water improvements. Natural hydrologic processes will be maintained by limiting runoff and managing storm-water using low impact development techniques. The number of projects incorporating LID techniques will be gradually increased over time.

1. Low impact development (LID) techniques, such as rain gardens, bio-retention, vegetated roofs, and permeable pavement, shall be the preferred and commonly used approach for all development and construction activities.

2. Storm-water and site development regulations should focus on methods that mimic natural hydrologic processes and minimize impervious surface coverage.

3. The storm and flood water storage capacity of existing ponds, water courses, streams, and wetlands shall be maintained and mitigation shall be provided for all impacts.

4. The removal of native vegetation should be limited to what is minimally necessary to accommodate development. Healthy mature trees should be retained whenever possible and landscaping for new development should include native drought tolerant vegetation.

4.4.4 Groundwater: The City's shallow groundwater, permeable soils, and dense concentration of commercial and industrial uses mean a significant risk of groundwater contamination exists. Groundwater quality will be protected or enhanced and potential sources of contamination, such as septic systems and improperly stored hazardous materials, will gradually be eliminated.

1. Uses that produce, handle, or store significant quantities of hazardous substances shall take steps to prevent contaminants from being released into the ground water or mixing with flood waters.

2. Septic systems are not an acceptable method of disposing of sewage in an urban area. All new buildings and developments shall be connected to the City's sewer system. Limited exceptions may be granted by the City of Burlington for parcels that are more than 200 feet from a sewer line. All septic systems shall be properly decommissioned when abandoned.

3. Except for those operated by a municipality or public utility district, wells shall not be used as a source of potable water. Wells shall be property decommissioned and sealed when abandoned.

4. Failing septic systems shall be immediately reported to the City of Burlington and the Skagit County Health Department.

5. The Skagit County Health Department shall coordinate with the City of Burlington prior to authorizing any septic permits, including, but not limited to, permits for septic repairs and the construction of new septic systems. Skagit County shall immediately notify the City of Burlington upon becoming aware of a failing septic system and shall take all available enforcement actions to bring the property into compliance. Under no circumstance shall the Skagit County issue a permit or take any action in violation of the policies in this section.

4.4.5 Ecological Footprint: Urban development eliminates natural vegetation, increases storm-water runoff, and fragments fish and wildlife habitat. To minimize these impacts the efficiency with which land is used and developed will be increased and most of the City's future growth will be accommodated through infill and redevelopment.

1. Accommodate growth and development through infill and redevelopment and by increasing the efficiency with which land is used and developed. Land in the unincorporated UGA should only be annexed and developed if absolutely necessary. UGA expansions shall not be permitted or supported unless there are no other viable alternatives.

2. Ecological and habitat impacts should be considered when evaluating UGA expansion proposals.

3. Adopt zoning and development regulations that permit and encourage infill, redevelopment, and efficient land use patterns.

4. Develop and implement a program that offsets the impacts associated with development in the unincorporated UGA through the purchase of conservation easements or development rights outside the UGA.

5. Evaluate ways to expand or modify the City's Agricultural Heritage Credit program and support Skagit County's efforts to purchase development rights outside the City's UGA.

4.4.6 Floodplain Development: Floodplain development can gradually increase flood risks by displacing and redirecting flood waters. Fish and wildlife habitat can also be negatively impacted by vegetation removal, water pollution, and changes to natural hydrologic processes. The spatial and vertical extent of the floodplain will be maintained, habitat impacts will be minimized, and new undeveloped areas in the floodplain will not be added to the City's UGA.

1. Evaluate the floodwater displacement impacts of new development and require mitigation for significant impacts.

2. The UGA shall not be further expanded into floodplain areas unless the expansion encompasses an existing municipal facility or an area that is already developed at urban densities.

3. Support efforts to develop regional floodplain plans and environmental mitigation strategies.

4. Flood control structures should be constructed or improved to protect the City's existing urbanized areas but shall not be constructed for the purpose of facilitating the urbanization of rural or undeveloped land in the floodplain.

5. Development housing essential public services or vulnerable populations shall be constructed with a flood protection elevation of at least three feet above the base flood elevation.

4.4.7 Public Safety: In some areas of the City flooding, earthquakes, and geologic hazards are significant risks. Inappropriate development or improperly designed structures can put the public at risk. Development will be limited in the most hazardous areas of the City and buildings and structures will be designed to prevent damage from flooding and other natural disasters.

1. Elevate new buildings sufficiently to account for changing natural conditions and the cumulative impact of past development and planned growth.

2. New lots that lack an adequate building site outside the special flood risk zone shall not be created except for conservation purposes, or to accommodate a public facility or utility.

3. Buildings located in the special flood risk zone shall be designed with open foundations that allow floodwaters to pass through unimpeded.

4. Special consideration shall be given to the design and location of critical facilities.

4.5 Special Management Areas

In addition to the goals and policies identified above, a number of special management areas have been identified. These areas are characterized by unique features, important habitat values, or the presence of severe natural hazard risks. The following goals and policies shall apply to the special management areas identified in this section. Special management areas shall be considered overlay areas within which the policies and restrictions outlined below shall apply in addition to any underlying zoning regulations.

4.5.1 Gages Slough

Gages Slough is linear system of interconnected wetlands and deep-water habitat areas that bisects the City. The slough is connected to, and directly influenced by, the Skagit River and connects undeveloped agricultural areas to the east and west of the City. While the slough has been extensively modified in places it retains significant patches of native vegetation in comparison to other areas of the City and provides important habitat for amphibians, shorebirds, waterfowl (such as cavity nesting ducks), other birds, and bats. The slough is mapped as fish habitat by WDFW and provides important floodplain, water quality, and storm-water management functions.

The Gages Slough special management area includes the open water areas of the slough together with all associated wetlands, deep-water habitat, wetland buffers, and special flood risk areas. The Gages Slough Special Management Area is considered a Habitat of Local Importance and is subject to the following policies:

1. Priority should be given to public projects that have multiple benefits including wetland restoration, storm and flood water storage, and water quality.

2. Retain snags, decaying logs, and native vegetation.

3. Acquire property to restore wetland functions, increase storm and flood water storage capacity, enhance water quality, and provide opportunities for passive recreation.

4. New lots shall not be created unless they contain an adequate building site outside the Special Management Area.

4.5.2 Burlington Hill

Burlington Hill contains the single largest stand of forest remaining in the City and includes snags, decaying trees, rocky outcrops, talus, and cliffs. The entire hill is mapped as a geologically hazardous area and is predominantly comprised of slopes between 15 and 40 degrees. Limited areas of Burlington Hill have slopes in excess of 40 degrees. The hill possesses the largest relatively intact patch of habitat in the City of Burlington and may provide suitable habitat for bats, the Pileated Woodpecker, Bald Eagle, Purple Marin, Vaux's Swift, Peregrine Falcon and other birds such as cavity nesting ducks.

Burlington Hill has also been identified as an erosion hazard area and wetlands have been identified at the base of the hill. The rocky soil conditions and steep topography of the hill suggest that at least some of these wetland areas are fed by groundwater moving down the hill during the wet season. These wetland areas appear to be linked by a series of ditches and drainage features which flow to Joe Leary Slough, which is mapped as providing salmon habitat. Given these unique landscape features, development on the hill could impact wetlands and water courses located at the base of the hill.

The Burlington Hill Special Management Area shall include Burlington Hill and any wetland areas located at the base of the hill. The Burlington Hill Special Management Area is designated as a Habitat of Local Importance and shall be subject to the following policies:

1. Land divisions shall use a clustered layout that retains large interconnected blocks of open space. Open space blocks shall encompass steep slopes, talus fields, cliffs, and areas of established vegetation.

2. Vegetation shall only be removed to accommodate development and clearing shall be strictly limited to the minimum amount necessary. Preemptive or speculative clearing is not permitted.

3. Consider allowing lot sizes, building types, and road design standards to be modified if necessary to avoid natural hazards or preserve large blocks of established vegetation.

4. All new development shall include a geotechnical assessment identifying any geologic hazards present on the site. The geotechnical assessment shall also identify any potential offsite impacts, including erosion and changes to surface and subsurface hydrologic processes.

4.5.3 Skagit River

A large swath of land owned by the City and the Dike District parallels the Skagit River. This corridor is largely developed for low intensity uses such as parks, sports fields, and flood control structures. The shoreline areas between the dike and the Skagit River are within the Skagit River floodway and a strip of land 300 feet inland from the toe of the dike has been designated by the City of Burlington as a special flood risk area. The Skagit River corridor connects undeveloped agricultural and floodplain areas to the east and west of the City. Combined, this area provides important riparian functions. Development, including fill, new impervious surfaces, and vegetation clearing, could negatively impact water quality, hydrologic functions and present significant risks in the event of a flood.

The Skagit River Special Management Area has been designated as a Habitat of Local Importance and shall be subject to the following policies:

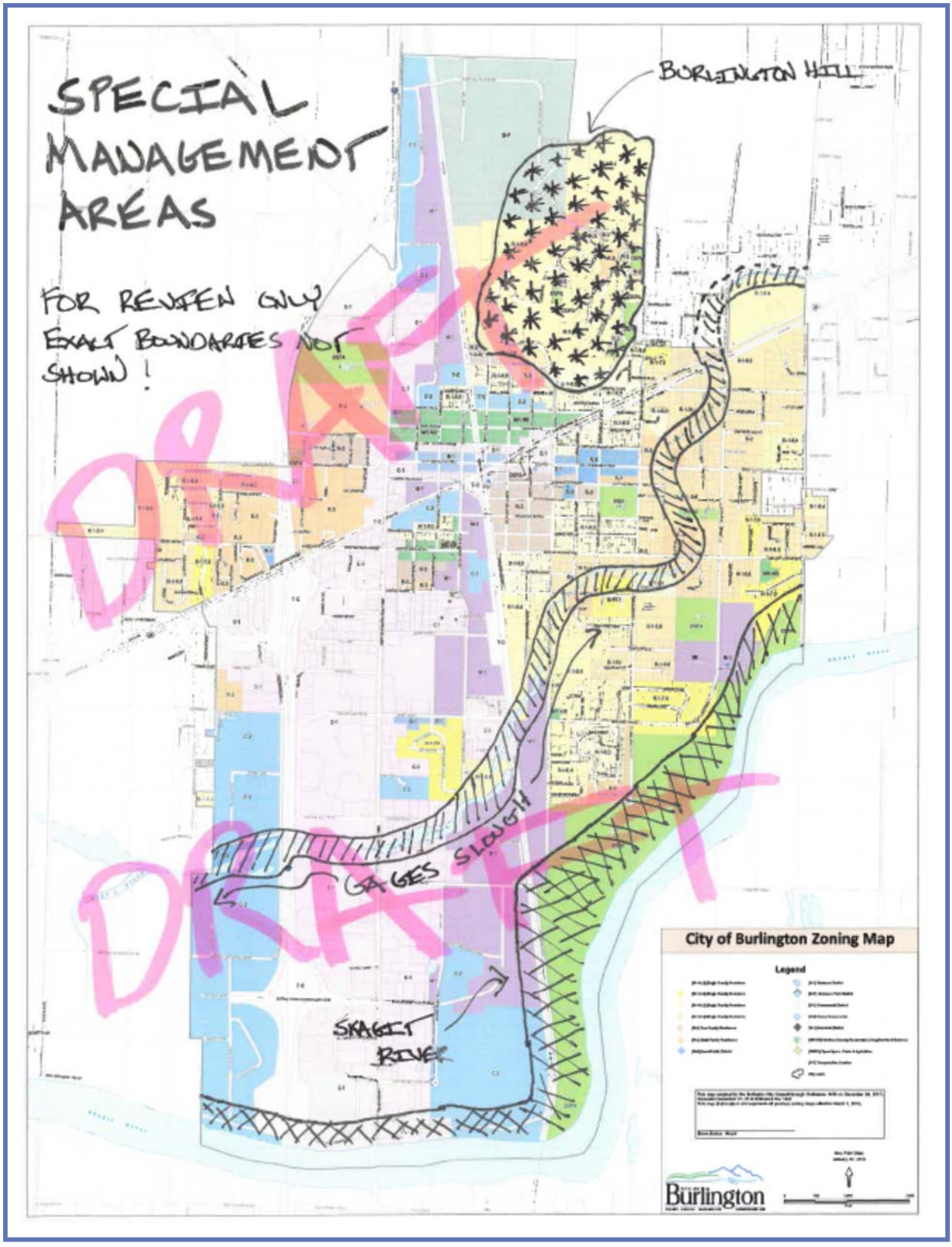
1. Development shall be limited to flood control structures, agriculture, public parks, and environmental restoration. Utilities and essential public facilities that must be located near the river, such as storm-water outfalls, bridges, and sewage treatment facilities, are also acceptable uses. Residential, commercial, and industrial development shall be prohibited.

2. New residential, commercial, and industrial development shall be prohibited and the use of new impermeable surfaces should be limited.

3. Acquire land for parks, flood control, and environmental conservation.

4. Development proposals involving significant amounts of grading or the construction of new permanent structures shall be coordinated with the Diking District.

5. The safety or integrity of dikes or flood control improvements shall not be compromised construction or development on adjoining properties and access for emergency flood fighting efforts shall be maintained.


SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS
FOR REVIEW ONLY
EXACT BOUNDARIES NOT SHOWN!
BURLINGTON HILL
GAGES SLOUGH
SKAGIT RIVER
DRAFT
DRAFT
City of Burlington Zoning Map
Legend
Burlington

5 Economic Development

5.1 Introduction

The Economic Development Element describes local economic conditions, includes estimates of future job growth, and explains how the economy will change over time. This element also outlines steps the City will take to enhance business activity, ensure the long term viability of municipal finances, and improve the wellbeing of its citizens. This element is focused on efforts to improve the lives of people living or working in the City of Burlington by minimizing the cost of living, providing robust employment opportunities, and by improving access to education, job training, and services. It also includes strategies for diversifying the economy and sustaining City's position as a regional hub for shopping, services and entertainment.

For many years the City benefited from a robust economy driven by retail sales and car dealerships. While these sectors provided a large number of jobs and supported high quality municipal services with a robust stream of tax revenue, their dominance also resulted in a local economy constrained by limited wages and a lack of economic diversity. As the economy changes and the population grows, actions must be taken to broaden the City's economic base, contain the cost of living, and ensure that Burlington's residents and business owners have the tools they need to compete in the modern economy.

The primary objectives of the Economic Development Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Business Activity.** Increase the amount, and value, of business activity occurring locally and diversify the economy by making investments in infrastructure, services, and workforce development, and by managing and land use policies and regulations to attract and promote certain economic sectors. The City will sustain its existing retail economy while increasing the prevalence of other economic sectors.

- **Financial Wellbeing.** Reduce the relative prevalence of poverty, increase wages, enhance the competiveness of the local workforce, and ensure municipal finances are secure and sustainable by diversifying the economy. Employment will be increased in sectors such as healthcare, construction, and logistics, and the amount of money available for discretionary spending will be increased by focusing on higher paying jobs, containing the cost of housing, transportation, utilities, and taxes, and by providing low cost public services such as fiber optic communications, education, parks, and community services.

- **Identity and Branding.** Establish an identity as a modern, innovation focused city that promotes new forms of development and economic activities though good government, high-quality cost effective services, and unique urban design elements.

5.2 Requirements

Under the Growth Management Act (GMA) the Economic Development Element must include a summary of local conditions, describe the City's strengths and weaknesses, and identify goals and policies aimed at improving economic conditions. The City is also required to ensure its planning policies, capital expenditures, and development regulations are capable of supporting 20 years of employment growth. The Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) has forecasted that by the year 2036 3,516 jobs will be added to Burlington's economy. Because different industries have different land use needs and servicing requirements, it is important to know what type of jobs to plan for, or which industries might be most compatible with the City's existing resources.

A central organizing principal of comprehensive plans, and an important requirement of the GMA, is consistency. Under the GMA all components of a comprehensive plan must be consistent with one another, and all of the City's actions must be consistent with the plan. From a practical perspective, this means the economic development element must be designed compatible with, and help to achieve the other elements of the plan. It also means that the other elements of the plan should be structured to help achieve the City's economic development objectives.

5.3 Current Conditions and Challenges

5.3.1 Summary

Over the past four decades Burlington's economy grew rapidly. Much of this growth was made possible by the City's advantageous location at the intersection of two major highways (I-5 and SR-20), the availability of flat, easily developable land along I-5, and the nationwide growth of chain retailers, regional shopping malls, and "big-box" stores. This pattern of growth, and the forces that supported it, are no longer dominant. Instead, a new pattern of development with different needs is emerging.

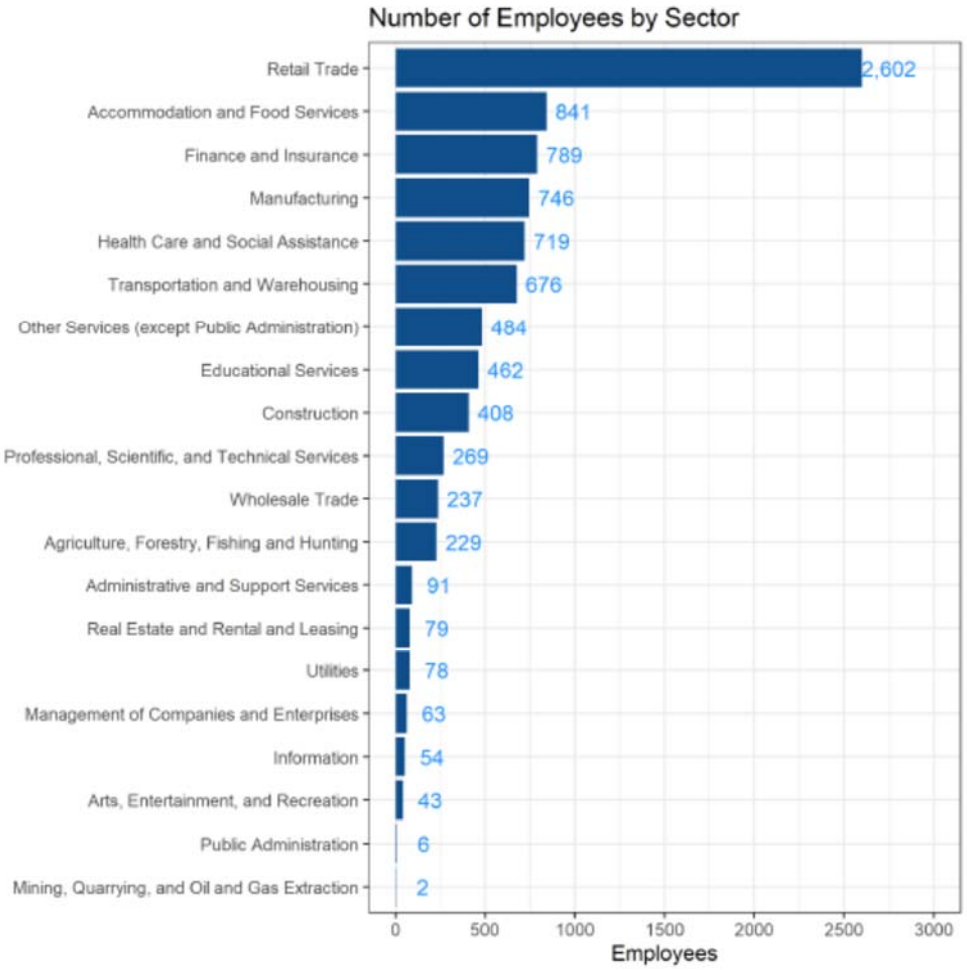
Most of the vacant land along I-5 and Burlington Boulevard has been developed. Land use regulations, increasing awareness of flood hazards, and the need to preserve agricultural land have made expanding the City outward difficult, costly, and unwise. At the same time technological advances, demographic shifts, and changing consumer preferences have reduced the demand for traditional "brick and mortar" retail space and rendered some forms of retail development obsolete.

The previous era of economic growth produced a large number of jobs and contributed to the City's robust tax base; however, this era of growth also created structural weaknesses in Burlington's economy. The City's economy lacks a diversity of jobs and is susceptible to changes in consumer spending. The dominance of the retail sector also means wages are lower in Burlington than in comparable cities, and the City is overly reliant on sales tax revenues to fund municipal services.

5.3.2 Workforce

In 2015, Burlington had a population of 10,464 people and 9,896 people were employed in the local economy. By 2036 the City's population is expected to growth by 3,808 people to 14,272 and employment is projected to increase by 3,516 jobs to 13,412 (2015 SCOG allocation).

Data collected by Western Washington University's Center for Economic and Business Research (CEBR) shows that as of 2018 nearly a third of the City's workforce was employed in retail. The next closest sector was "accommodations and food service", which employs approximately nine percent of the City's work force. The graph below provides more information.



** Source: CEBR City of Burlington Economic Development Report prepared by CEBR*

In 2016 approximately 87 percent of the City's population (over the age of 25) had completed high school or held a college degree. By 2019 this number had increased to 89 percent and the percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher had increased from 14 percent to 19 percent. The tables below illustrate how the education level of Burlington's population compares to other nearby cities.

Table 5.1 Educational Attainment in 2016

	Burlington	Mount Vernon	Sedro Woolley	Anacortes	Ferndale	Bellingham	Arlington
High School not Completed	13%	19%	9%	5%	12%	7%	9%
High School	34%	24%	41%	22%	26%	19%	30%
Some college or associates degree	39%	35%	37%	35%	37%	33%	43%
Bachelor's Degree	9%	15%	8%	23%	18%	26%	12%
Graduate Degree	5%	7%	4%	15%	7%	15%	5%

Table 5.2 Educational Attainment in 2019

	Burlington	Mount Vernon	Sedro Woolley	Anacortes	Ferndale	Bellingham	Arlington
High School not Completed	11%	16%	8%	5%	8%	6%	9%
High School	31%	26%	36%	20%	24%	18%	32%
Some college or associates degree	39%	37%	37%	34%	40%	32%	41%
Bachelor's Degree	14%	14%	13%	26%	17%	28%	11%
Graduate Degree	5%	8%	6%	16%	11%	17%	8%

**Source: American Community Survey – 2016 & 2019 Five Year Estimates – Educational Attainment for population 25 and older*

5.3.3 Income and Poverty

In 2016 the median household income in Burlington was $47,500. By 2019 the City's median household income had increased by $2,141 to $49,641. At the same time the City's estimated poverty rate declined from 20.5 percent to 18.4 percent. The tables below provide information on the City's 2016 and 2019 median household income and poverty rates in comparison to other nearby cities. It should be noted that household income is affected by the number of workers in a household. All things being equal a household with two or more working adults will have a higher household income than a household comprised of a single working adult. As a result, it is necessary to consider a city's median household income together with its demographic composition and labor force participation rate. In addition, as noted in the CEBR report, economic statistics from 2019 number may be impacted by COVID related factors.

Table 5.3 - Poverty Rates in 2016 and 2019							
	Burlington	**Mount Vernon**	**Sedro Wooley**	**Anacortes**	**Ferndale**	**Bellingham**	**Arlington**
2016	21%	20%	21%	10%	16%	22%	11%
2019	18%	14%	14%	9%	12%	21%	5%
Change	*-3%*	*-6%*	*-7%*	*-1%*	*-4%*	*-1%*	*-6%*

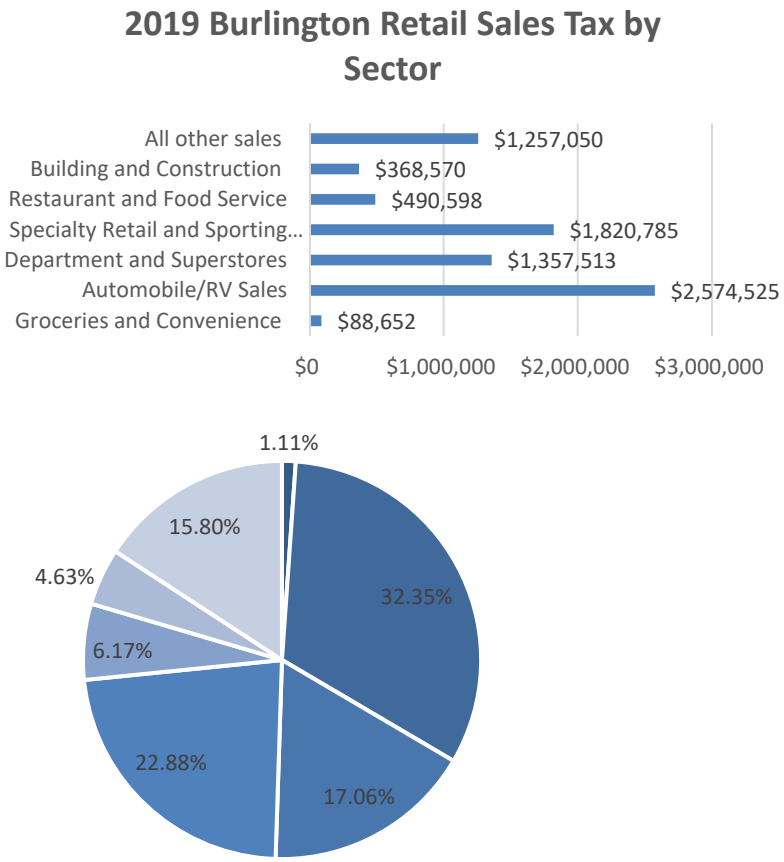
**Source: American Community Survey – 2016 & 2019 Five Year Estimates – poverty rates by city*

Table 5.4 - Median Household Income in 2016 and 2019							
	Burlington	**Mount Vernon**	**Sedro Wooley**	**Anacortes**	**Ferndale**	**Bellingham**	**Arlington**
2016	$47,500	$49,307	$44,643	$61,922	$56,859	$44,441	$66,615
2019	$49,641	$62,056	$60,863	$71,844	$73,074	$53,396	$82,626
Change	*+2,141*	*+12,749*	*+$16,220*	*+$9,922*	*+$16,215*	*+$8,955*	*+$16,011*

**Source: American Community Survey – 2016 & 2019 Five Year Estimates – median household income by city*

5.3.4 Sales Tax Collections

From the standpoint of financing municipal services, Burlington has long benefited from strong retails sales and a generous per-capita sales tax collection rate. According to the Washington State Department of Revenue, Burlington had over $1 billion in taxable sales in 2019. With the exception of Bellingham, this is the highest figure for any city in Skagit County or Whatcom County in absolute terms. On a per-capita basis, the City's sales tax collection rate is higher than all other nearby cities. The largest economic sector contributing to sales tax collections was automobile and RV sales, followed by specialty retail, and department stores.



Source: CEBR City of Burlington Economic Development Report prepared by CEBR

5.4 Future Conditions and Opportunities

5.4.1 Summary

Burlington's population and employment base will continue to increase. By 2036 the City's population is expected to grow by 3,808 people and 3,516 jobs will be added to the local economy. However, the City faces a number of challenges that must be addressed in order to sustain the forecasted growth and improve conditions for the City's residents and businesses.

The City has benefited from decades of economic expansion associated with retailing, car dealerships, and services. This growth was sustained by the availability of vacant land along I-5 and a national retail model dominated by chain stores, "big-box" retailers, and regional walls. With the rise of online shopping, changing consumer preferences, and shifting demographic trends, this model is no longer dominant and some forms of retail, such as regional malls, have become virtually obsolete. As a result, it is unlikely the future will resemble the past. In order to remain competitive Burlington must adapt and change.

While the City has unquestionably benefited from the previous era of growth, this growth also created challenges the City must work to address. Notably the dominance of the retail sector has left Burlington dependent on a single category of economic activity. Also, because wages are lower in the retail sector, Burlington struggles with lower household incomes and higher poverty rates than other nearby cities, such as Sedro-Woolley.

In order to improve conditions for residents and businesses the City must diversify its economic base, work to sustain the retail sector, and establish a unique identity. To succeed Burlington must be a place where people want to live and work, not just a place they go to get things they need.

5.4.2 Economic Trends

The CEBR study included a forecast of job growth by industry. This forecast projects that the City's economy will continue to grow with retail playing a diminished role. Importantly the CEBR forecast assumes the City continues to implement its current economic development policies. Notably these projections are short-term in nature, as long term economic shifts are difficult to predict particularly in a city the size of Burlington. Sectors that are expected to increase include healthcare, services, and accommodation and food service.

Because the CEBR forecast covers a short period of time the City applied the relative growth of each job category to the total 2036 employment forecast issued by the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) in order to produce a long range employment forecast for each job category. A more detailed explanation of this forecasting work is included in Volume II.

Table 5.6 – Short-Term CEBR Forecast

Industry	Current Employment	5-Year Future Employment Growth	Annual %
Retail Trade	2,602	114	1.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	841	141	4.2%
Finance and Insurance	789	32	1.0%
Manufacturing	746	30	1.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	719	60	2.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	676	35	1.3%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	484	48	2.5%
Educational Services	462	46	2.5%
Construction	408	20	1.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	269	14	1.3%
Wholesale Trade	237	10	1.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	229	7	0.8%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	91	6	1.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	79	4	1.3%
Utilities	78	0	0.0%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	63	4	1.7%
Information	54	2	1.0%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	43	8	4.6%
Public Administration	6	0	0.6%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	2	0	1.1%
Total - All Industries	8,879	604	1.7%

Table 5.6 – 20-Year Employment Growth by Job Category		
Industry	**Employment Growth**	**Land Requirements by Comprehensive Plan Designation**
Retail	1,592	MUC & MUR-1
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Services	629	
Healthcare	363	
Manufacturing	182	CI & MUR-2
Wholesale, Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	472	
Government	None	PFT
Education	278	
Total	***3,516***	

5.4.3 Opportunities and Challenges

The CEBR study included a labor quotients analysis. A labor quotients analysis essentially determines how prevalent a given sector is in the local economy relative to its prevalence in the broader economy. Growing sectors with a low local labor quotient can be thought of as opportunities. In Burlington's case, healthcare, construction, education, and warehousing/transportation are all growing economic sectors with low local labor quotients. Importantly, these sectors are associated with higher wages than the City's dominant retail sector, and represent significant growth opportunities.

The City's proximity to the Canadian border and its location at the intersection of two major highways and two rail lines suggests the warehousing and transportation sector may be a feasible opportunity for growth. Burlington benefits from a large amount of developable, or potentially re-developable, industrial land, much of which is strategically located along the BNSF railroad right-of-way (ROW) and has good access to I-5 and other regional transportation routes. To support growth in this sector, policies and regulations should be adopted to protect industrial land from incompatible uses, preserve large blocks of land for development, and protect and enhance access to rail lines and regional highways.

Healthcare is another growing field with good paying jobs that is under resented in Burlington's economy. The City's central location and abundance of underutilized commercial land suggest the capacity to absorb an abundance of health care providers, clinics, and related services such as laboratories and offices. In order to encourage healthcare related development, the City should review development regulations and planning policies to ensure a smooth permitting process for healthcare uses. Training and education are also important. The City should partner with local schools to raise awareness of healthcare related jobs and encourage the expansion of local training and education opportunities.

Construction businesses often struggle to find suitable sites. Many of these businesses are too small to lease or develop traditional industrial sites, but have characteristics, such as outdoor storage, noise and lighting impacts, and heavy truck and equipment traffic that make them incompatible with residential and commercial areas. The City should establish one or more light industrial zones to accommodate these businesses. Again, education and training are crucial. The City should encourage the establishment and expansion of local training and education opportunities.

Diversifying the City's economy does not mean abandoning the retail sector. Instead the City should work to retain its position as a regional center for shopping, entertainment, and services. Success will require retooling the City's approach to commercial development. Increasingly shopping will be more discretionary and entertainment focused. Large chain stores and national developers can be expected to play a less dominant role. In the future smaller scale development patterns, more flexible site and street layouts, and attractive landscaping and street frontages will be important for attracting businesses and customers. In addition, the City should adopt policies and regulations that preserve important freeway frontage in the

Westside Freeways Sales area for car dealerships and other similar uses that require good visibility and access.

Sustaining the City's existing retail economy will require more customers with more money to spend. The City has experienced tremendous success fostering mixed use and residential development in commercial areas. These new residents represent a captive audience within walking distance of many of the City's businesses. This growth should be fostered and encouraged. Finally, larger household incomes inevitably leads to more consumer spending. The City should attract higher paying jobs, improve workforce skills, and encourage greater workforce participation.

5.5 Goals and Policies

The goals and policies in this section will inform the City's approach to economic development and ensure consistency with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The bold headings below identify the City's economic development goals. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington, and by other government agencies, shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

5.5.1 Economic Diversification: Increase the number of jobs in sectors other than retail, particularly in growing fields that are currently underrepresented such as healthcare, logistics, education, and construction.

1. Attract and retain business related to freight handling, warehousing, and logistics by maintaining the City's industrial land base, particularly in the North and South Burlington Industrial Areas. In the North and South Burlington Industrial Areas large tracts of land will be maintained for uses requiring good access to rail lines and regional transportation routes, fragmentation into small land holdings will be discouraged through minimum lot size requirements, and incompatible uses will be discouraged.

2. Promote the development of healthcare facilities such as hospitals, clinics, and laboratories by permitting such facilities in commercial areas, by partnering with local schools and economic development organizations to promote careers in healthcare, and by expanding local opportunities for training and education. Work with real estate professionals to promote Burlington's advantages for healthcare related development.

3. Increase employment opportunities in building trades and construction businesses by providing areas for construction businesses to locate. Work with local schools and economic development organizations to promote careers in construction, and by expanding local opportunities for training and education.

4. Foster partnerships with businesses, government agencies, and private organizations involved in cross-border shipping, import/export business, and related enterprises.

5.5.2 Workforce Development: Improve the qualifications of Burlington's workforce by promoting employment in high-demand fields and improving local access to training and education. The percentage of the City's workforce with post high school education or training will be increased and opportunities for local training and education will be improved.

1. Support the development of local vocational training and higher education opportunities by encouraging the development of public and private trade schools, colleges, and other similar institutions in Burlington.

2. Leverage existing City resources such as the Burlington Library, the municipal fiber-optic system to promote learning, career development, and remote education.

3. Work to establish local education and training facilities such as community college facilities, a university branch campus, or trade schools.

4. Partner with local schools and economic development organizations to promote careers in high demand fields.

5. Leverage existing City services, such as the Burlington Library, and partner with other organizations and government agencies to provide classes or assist in obtaining basic employment credentials such as food handling cards, alcohol serving licenses, CPR, computer skills, etc.

5.5.3 Financial Health: Improve the financial well-being of Burlington's households and businesses. By 2036 median household incomes will be increased, poverty will be reduced, and workforce participation rates will be increased. In addition, the City will work to maintain a financially sustainable budget and diversify revenue sources to avoid an over reliance on a single economic sector.

1. Work to limit monthly household expenses particularly with respect to housing, transportation, utilities, and taxes by:

    a. Supporting a robust supply of market rate housing;

    b. Working with private organizations and government agencies to promote the development of affordable housing;

    c. Minimizing transportation related expenses by encouraging growth in centrally located areas with good access to employment, services, shopping, and transit;

    d. Minimize utility costs and municipal capital expenses on a per-capita or per-unit basis by directing growth to areas where utilities, public facilities, and services already exist or where they can be provided in a cost effective manner;

    e. Maximize the public benefits derived from each tax dollar by continually striving to deliver high-quality public services and facilities in a cost effective and efficient manner.

2. Leverage existing public assets, such as the Burlington Library, Parks and Recreation programs, and partnerships with local schools to provide young people and adults with the

tools they need to succeed, such as affordable after-school programs and adult education in basic skills.

3. Improve access to broadband internet service, particularly among lower income households.

4. Adopt fee structures, regulations, and policies that ensure new development is self-funding and does not burden existing residents and business owners with additional expenses or financial liabilities.

5.5.5 Identity: Establish, and vigorously work to maintain, a unique identity that distinguishes Burlington from other cities in the region. Burlington's identity will focus on its compact footprint, the provision of high-quality cost effective and efficient services, and timely, consistent and business-like decision making. The City will be a forward looking innovator that fosters new forms of business and development and connections with other places.

1. Deliver timely, consistent, and clear permit decisions. Ensure the development regulations avoid unnecessary or redundant procedures and work to ensure codes and policies are clear, easily understood, and consistent.

2. Improve the appearance of critical street frontages, particularly along the Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue corridors through landscaping, pedestrian amenities, street furniture, and lighting.

3. Develop streetscape and urban design plans for the Fairhaven Avenue and Burlington Boulevard corridors.

4. Consider improvements that define the City's key entrances such as signage, public art, and landscaping.

5. Work to establish a consistent architectural style and urban design theme for municipal buildings and street fixtures such and signage, lighting, benches, and trash cans, and establish a consistent design theme and appearance for City publications, signage, and websites.

5.5.6 Retail and Services: Maintain and expand the City's position as a regional center for shopping, entertainment, and services. The City will maintain or increase its per-capita sales tax collection rate by aligning land use plans, regulations, and capital expenditures to support the demands of retail in the modern era.

1. Increase the number of potential customers living within walking distance of stores and services by encouraging mixed-use development and residential development in commercial areas.

2. Maximize the amount of discretionary household income available to support retailers and services by minimizing housing costs through the robust production of affordable market rate housing.

3. Make Burlington an attractive and memorable place to visit and do business by improving streetscapes with landscaping, pedestrian amenities, effective street lighting, and other similar improvements.

4. Accommodate the needs of the modern retail environment through flexible and adaptable development patterns, including fully connected street-networks, smaller building footprints, and street facing facades.

5. Preserve valuable freeway frontage in the Westside Freeway Sales area for car dealerships and other similar businesses that require good freeway visibility and access by discouraging incompatible uses and the fragmentation of large parcels.

6 Public Facilities and Services

6.1 Introduction

The Public Facilities and Services Element describes how the City and other public agencies will provide the services and facilities needed to support the City's future growth. The Public Facilities and Services Element is an important component of the City's comprehensive plan, because providing adequate facilities and services is crucial to advancing the other element of this plan. Without adequate facilities and services, development may not occur as planned, employers and businesses might avoid the City, housing production could lag, and the quality of life enjoyed by the City's residents would be diminished.

Without careful planning the cost of Public Facilities can quickly exceed the City's ability to pay. Unfortunately, there are far too many examples of communities where adequate facilities are not provided to support growth, or where inefficient land use and development patterns have imposed heavy burdens on tax payers. This plan seeks to avoid these outcomes, and maintain and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by the City's residents, by coordinating infrastructure plans with land use plans, encouraging development patterns that use the City's existing services and facilities efficiently, and by coordinating with other agencies and service providers to eliminate wasteful redundancies and unnecessary delays.

The primary objectives of the Public Facilities and Services Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Consistency.** Investments in public facilities and services will be viewed as a tool for achieving the objectives outlined in other sections of this plan. All financial decisions, including the development and approval detailed capital plans and annual budgetary decisions will be consistent with, and implement, the City's comprehensive plan.

- **Value and Sustainability.** Spending decisions involving public services and facilities will consider both short and long term financial impacts and will be made after evaluating the costs and benefits of various options that achieve the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Land use plans and plans for public services and facilities will be developed in tandem to ensure the costs of various development scenarios are fully considered.

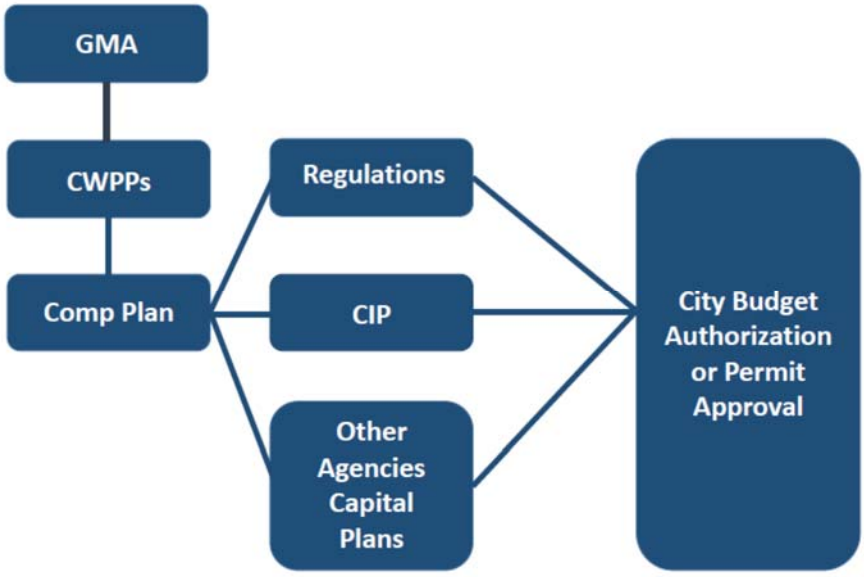
- **Maintenance.** Public facilities and infrastructure are expensive long term investments. In order to avoid maximize the value of public tax dollars and avoid the expense of premature replacements the City will budget adequate money for maintenance and repairs and will prioritize maintenance.

6.2 Requirements

The Public Facilities and Services Element of this plan is intended to address both the capital facility and utility planning requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA). For capital facilities, the Comprehensive Plan must include a forecast of the capital facilities that will be needed to support the City's projected population and employment growth. The Comprehensive Plan must also identify the general location and capacity of private utilities, such as electrical, telecommunication, and natural gas infrastructure.

Addressing the capital facility planning requirements of the GMA involves two components, including a long term (20 year) plan identifying, at a conceptual level, projected facility needs and potential funding sources, and a detailed short-term plan covering a six year period. The six-year plan is referred to as the "Capital Improvement Plan" (CIP) and must identify projects the City is committed to moving forward with and the specific sources of revenue that will be used to pay for them. The CIP is updated annually to reflect current financial conditions and capital spending needs. The CIP is included in Volume II.

One of the core requirements of the GMA is consistency. The City's Comprehensive Plan must be an "internally consistent document". All of the City's actions must be consistent with the adopted plan and the plan must be coordinated with plans adopted by neighboring jurisdictions. In addition, most actions be State agencies and other government agencies, such the Burlington Edison School District, Dike District 12, and the Skagit Public Utility District must be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. From a practical standpoint this means that the same set of assumptions must be used throughout the plan, the City's budgetary and permitting decisions must be consistent the Comprehensive Plan, and the City must work with other government agencies to ensure a high level of coordination.



6.3 Current and Future Conditions

6.3.1 Summary

In Burlington, Public facilities and services are provided by the City, other government agencies and private utilities. The City provides sewer service, fire and police protection, fiber optic communications infrastructure, parks, library services, and other basic municipal services. Other government agencies provides specialized services including drinking water, education, flood protection, and transit service. Private utilities provide electricity, natural gas, communication services, and garbage collection.

Table 6.1 Public Facility and Service Providers – Government Agencies

Service	Provider	Planning Document
Sewer	City of Burlington	Comprehensive Sewer Plan and Burlington CIP
Drinking Water	Skagit PUD	Coordinated Water System Plan
Fire Protection	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
Police Protection	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
Library	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
Parks and Recreation	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Parks and Recreation Element, PROs Plan, and Burlington CIP
Public Transportation	Skagit Area Transit (SKAT)	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Transportation Element, SKAT Transit Development Plan (TDP)
Jail Services	Skagit County	Skagit County Comprehensive Plan - Capital Facilities Element, Skagit County CIP
Municipal Court	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan, Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
Stormwater Management	City of Burlington	Surface Water Management Plan, Burlington Comprehensive Plan, Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
Education (Kindergarten – 12th Grade)	Burlington Edison School District (BESD)	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and BESD CIP
Flood Protection	Diking District 12	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Natural Resources Element
Fiber Optic Communication	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP
General Municipal Services	City of Burlington	Burlington Comprehensive Plan - Public Facilities and Services Element and Burlington CIP

Table 6.2 Public Facility and Service Providers – Private Utilities		
Service	**Provider**	**Planning Document**
Garbage and Recycling	Waste Management	N/A – Private Provider
Natural Gas	Cascade Natural Gas	N/A – Private Provider
Electricity	Puget Sound Electric (PSE)	N/A – Private Provider

6.3.2 Sanitary Sewer Service

The City of Burlington provides sanitary sewer service within the municipal boundaries and to a limited number of properties in the City's unincorporated urban growth area (UGA). The City also provides sewer service to the Bayview Ridge UGA in unincorporated Skagit County. Sewer service is provided under contract to the South Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District and the Skagit Valley Casino. The "City of Burlington Wastewater Comprehensive Plan" is a detailed functional plan identifying future sewer needs, funding sources, and capital plans.

The growth forecasts included in the Wastewater Comprehensive Plan are consistent with Comprehensive Plan. Future growth related capital needs will be financed by a combination of user fees (system development charges) and developer contributions. Through the year 2036 the City is not planning on financing any major sewer expansions to facilitate new growth in areas that currently lack sewer service, including the unincorporated Burlington UGA. As documented in the Land Use Element, the City has sufficient development capacity within its municipal boundaries to accommodate all of the projected population and employment growth.

Sewer service is an important tool for managing growth. In order to avoid burdening existing rate payers, and to encourage compact and efficient land use patterns, capital spending on sewer infrastructure will be focused on maintaining and upgrading existing sewer infrastructure and accommodating additional growth in areas that already have sewer service. Sewer extensions to areas that lack sewer service will be permitted, but must be developer driven and financed. Additionally, sewer service in the unincorporated portions of the City's UGA will be contingent on annexation or, in limited circumstances, and annexation agreement.

Beyond Burlington's UGA, the City will continue to provide sewer service to the existing Bayview Ridge UGA and fulfill the terms of its contractual obligations to South lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District and the Skagit Valley Casino. With the exception of these existing commitments, sewer service will not be provided to facilitate new development outside of the City's UGA.

Sewer capital projects and funding sources are addressed in detail in the Sewer Comprehensive Plan. The sewer system is funded through connection charges and user fees. Sewer revenue is isolated to an "enterprise fund" that can only be used for sewer purposes. As documented in the Sewer Comprehensive Plan, the sewer system will have sufficient funds to serve the City's planned growth.

6.3.3 Stormwater

Within the City of Burlington stormwater is managed by combination of municipal and private infrastructure. Stormwater management is subject to, and regulated by, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued to the City by the Washington State Department of Ecology. More information on the City's stormwater management program is provided in the Natural Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional information is included in the "2005 Updated Surface Water Management Plan" and the "2022 City of Burlington Stormwater Management Program Plan". These documents provide detailed information on the City's stormwater management policies, infrastructure requirements, and funding sources.

The City will manage stormwater by regulating private development, acquiring and restoring wetland along the Gages Slough corridor, and by upgrading municipal stormwater infrastructure as needed. Broadly, the goal is to maintain and restore natural stormwater functions. The need for new municipal infrastructure will be minimized by accommodating growth though infill and redevelopment in existing developed areas, encouraging more efficient land use patters, and by requiring the use of Low Impact Development (LID) measures. The City may also explore expanding the existing Agricultural Heritage Program to offset stormwater impacts associated with new development on previously undeveloped sites, particularly in the City's unincorporated UGA.

A detailed breakdown of future stormwater needs and projected costs is provided in the Surface Water Management Plan. Stormwater improvements are funded from a dedicated stormwater utility fee. The stormwater utility generates approximately $1 million each year, resulting in a total revenue stream of approximately $21 million for the through the year 2036. Revenue from the stormwater utility fee can be used to pay for construction, maintenance, planning and design projects.

A portion of the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenue collected by the City is also available to fund stormwater capital expenses. After deducting REET money allocated to park projects, approximately $200,000 is available annually to fund stormwater and City facility (building) projects. While the precise distribution of this funding varies from year to year based on the City's needs, for the purpose of this plan it is assumed that half the available REET funds will be available for stormwater projects, resulting in a total revenue stream of approximately $2.1 million through the year 2036.

In addition to utility fees and REET revenue, the City has historically received grant funding for stormwater capital projects. Grant funding varies significantly, reaching as much as $1 million in some yeas. For long range planning purposes a conservative estimate of $250,000 per year has been used, meaning that through the year 2036, the City can expect to receive approximately $5.25 million in grant funding.

Table 6.3 – Stormwater Funding Summary		
Funding Source	**Yearly Revenue**	**21-Year Revenue (2015 -2036)**
Stormwater Utility Fee	$1,000,000	$21,000,000
REET	$100,000	$2,100,000
Grants	$250,000	$5,250,000
Total	***$1,350,000***	***$28,350,000***

6.3.4 Fire and Emergency Medical Services

The City provides fire and emergency medical services (EMS) within the City. The City also provides EMS services to rural areas surrounding the City under an agreement with Skagit County. The Burlington Fire Department (BFD) has not identified any growth related capital needs through the year 2036. Because the city's land use plan envisions directing growth to centrally located areas, service can continue to be provided from BFD's existing facility. However a detailed study should be conducted to assess the impact of growth on the service life of BFD's equipment.

It is thought that a significant share of BFD's EMS call volume is drive by development in unincorporated Skagit County. The City is planning on working with Skagit County to study the impact of this growth and evaluate potential mitigation strategies including impact fee revenue sharing, changes to land use policies in unincorporated Skagit County, or transportation improvements to reduce response times and travel distances.

No growth related capital projects have been identified for fire and emergency medical services through the year 2036.

6.3.5 Police

When fully staffed the Burlington Police Department is comprised of approximately 27 commissioned police officers, an evidence technician, a limited commission community service officer, and four non-commissioned support staff.

The Police Department is located in the City's Public Safety Building, which also houses the Municipal Court. The Police Department's facilities include general office space, interview rooms, a temporary prisoner detention area, and other utility and storage areas. The Police Department operates a fleet of approximately 20 vehicles, including nine fully marked patrol vehicles, a command vehicle, a community service officer vehicle and other unmarked vehicle for detectives, and general administrative use. The department's vehicles are stored in a parking facility is enclosed by a fence, a project that was completed in 2022. In addition to vehicles, the department has an inventory of specialty equipment such as shields, barriers, less lethal launchers, radar equipment and other technology.

In recently years the Police Department has struggled to fully staff its operations. As of 2022 the department employed 23 police officers and was actively working to fill openings. The Police Department has not identified any growth related capital needs.

No growth related capital projects have been identified for police services through the year 2036.

6.3.6 Library

The Burlington Public Library promotes early literacy, encourages lifelong learning, and supports evolving technology. Libraries are essential for addressing equity, and Burlington Public Library serves all of the city's residents, connecting them to information and ideas throughout their lives.

The Burlington Library has a five-person advisory board, and is staffed with five full time librarians and a total of 10.5 full time equivalents (FTEs). The library is housed in a 22,000 square foot building, and has a collection of 53,018 items—which includes print materials, DVDs, audio CDs, and hands-on literacy kits for kids.

Twenty-two internet access computers and ten laptops featuring with the Microsoft suite are available for public use. Self-service printing and copying services are provided in the Oasys Copy Center, complete with a touch screen printing station and mobile printing capability. Eight catalog computers and two self-checkout stations facilitate easy access to the library collection. Wi-Fi is free to the public, and remote connection is made possible with five Wi-Fi hotspots available for check-out. Even the night sky is made accessible through Two Orion StarBlast telescopes donated from the Island County Astronomical Society.

Future upgrades include acquiring tablet computers for the Children's area to provide access to educational apps; and technology upgrades to the front desk and meeting room to make the library widely accessible. Upgrades are planned to the Burlington Rotary Community Meeting Room to create a Hybrid in-person/virtual teleconference suite. Additional planned technology upgrades include a touch screen smart board for programs, a large screen monitor for announcements, and the addition of two computer stations in study rooms for use in telehealth appointments and virtual job interviews. The Library will be able to support the City's projected growth without the need for major capital improvements.

No growth related capital expense have been identified for the library through the year 2036.

6.3.7 Parks and Recreation

Burlington has 20 parks and recreational facilities encompassing approximately 173 acres. This includes 144 acres of developed park land and 29 undeveloped acres. The majority of the undeveloped land is managed for conservation, flood control, or storm-water management purposes. At 116 acres Skagit River Park is the largest park in the city and serves as a facility for

regional and statewide events. In addition to these facilities, the City's three public schools contribute an additional 64 acres of open space, as well as athletic fields and playgrounds that are open to the public during non-school hours. Diking District 12 also owns a significant amount of open space, primarily along the Skagit River corridor. The Dike District's property includes trails and open space areas. A complete description of the City's park system is provided in the Parks and Recreation Element.

Funding for park related capital projects is primarily generated from two sources, REET and impacts fees. Historically the City has received approximately $800,000 - $1 million a year in REET revenue. Half of which is allocated for park improvements. Conservatively REET can be expected to generate a total revenue stream of approximately$16,800,000 through the year 2036.

Impact fee revenue is another significant source of revenue for park improvements. The City charges a park impact fee of $655 per dwelling for residential development and $0.50 per square foot for non-residential construction. Based on the City's projected population and employment growth, the park impact fee is expected to generate a total of approximately $2,002,335 through the year 2036.

Approximately $56,298,581 in capital expenses have been identified for the park system through the year 2036. Approximately $41,812,826 of this amount is growth related and needed to support the City's planned development. A summary of available funding sources is provided below. Detailed information on projected park needs, funding sources, and service priorities is provided in the "Parks Recreation and Open Space" (PROS) plan and Volume II.

Table 6.4 – Park Funding Summary

Funding Source	Yearly Revenue	21-Year Revenue (2015 -2036)
REET	$400,000	$8,400,000
Impact Fees	$95,349	$2,002,335
Total	***$495,349***	***$10,402,335***

Table 6.5 – Funding Gap (2015 – 2036)

Total Estimated Expenses	$56,298,581
Total Estimated Revenue	$10,402,335
Difference	**($45,896,246)**

As illustrated in table 6.5, there is a sizable gap between the cost of planned park improvements and available revenue sources. In future years the City will need to either revise the list of planned park projects to lower costs, explore additional revenue sources, or both. In particular the City may want to explore increasing park impact fees. Also by creating a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) REET revenue currently allocated to transportation projects could be reallocated to park projects. In addition some of the planned park improvements involve trails or multi-use paths that could be funded with TBD revenue. Grant funding is another potential source of revenue the City could more aggressively pursue.

6.3.8 Municipal Broadband

The City of Burlington provides an open access fiber optics network. The City provides local internet service providers (ISPs) with access to the City's fiber optic infrastructure, allowing for competitive, cost effective high speed internet access throughout the City and in portions of Skagit County.

The City owns and maintains a fiber optics network but does not directly provide internet service to businesses or residences. Instead the City provides local ISPs with access to the City's fiber infrastructure. The City does however, work directly with other government agencies and non-profit organizations located within the City of Burlington. The City also uses its fiber optic network to connect or control traffic signals, sewer pump stations, municipal Wi-Fi hotspots, network security cameras, city buildings. The fiber optic network also provides City facilities with access to a centralized data center which can be used to provide central services such as phones and access control to City buildings.

The fiber network has a modest cost recovery process to help offset repair and expansion of the fiber system. The City continues to expand its fiber optic infrastructure in conjunction with new development, street improvement projects, and as funding allows. Municipal fiber network operating expenses are funded by user fees. Capital improvements and system expansions are funded by a mixture of user fees, the City's general fund, and grants.

6.3.9 Education

Public education in grades K – 12 is provided by the Burlington Edison School District (BESD). BESD operates six schools with total capacity of 3,210 students. Three of BESD schools, including West View Elementary, Lucille Umbarger Elementary, and Burlington Edison High School, are located in the City of Burlington. BESD enrollment declined between 2013 and 2019 and BESD projects that this decline will continue through at least 2027. BESD has no long term enrollment projections beyond the year 2027. BESD's six-year capital improvement plan notes that the district's enrollment projections do not account for ongoing development or projected population growth. For these reasons the City of Burlington does not have a high level of confidence in the district's enrollment projections.

The Burlington Edison School District has requested that the City not collect impact fee for school facilities. In order to ensure School facilities are provided commensurate with the City's projected growth, as a condition of receiving permits, zoning changes, or impact fees, BESD will be required to prepare a detailed capital plan consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the growth projects adopted by the City and Skagit County.

6.3.10 Transit Service

The Skagit Area Transit (SKAT) operates 19 bus routes, including six local routes, three commuter routes, and six primarily rural routes. Four routes originate in, or pass through, the City of Burlington, including route 80X which provides express commuter service from Bellingham to Mount Vernon, route 208 which connects Burlington and Mount Vernon and provides service along the Burlington Boulevard/Riverside Drive corridor, and routes serving the Anacortes and Sedro Woolley. Chuckanut Station, which includes a park and ride facility is a major hub for transit service in the City and provides convenient access to downtown Burlington and the Burlington Edison High School. SKAT route 208, which serves the Burlington Boulevard corridor, is the most productive bus route in Skagit County and accounts for nearly 24 percent of SKAT's total ridership.

SKAT has indicated their current facilities are not adequate to handle anticipated growth. SKAT is constructing a new Maintenance, Operations, and Administrative facility. The new facility is located outside the City in the Bayview Ridge urban growth area. When completed the facility will allow SKAT to operated electric buses and enlarge its vehicle fleet. SKAT plans to complete the new facility in 2024. To meet the City's future transportation needs SKAT is planning on establishing a new circulator route. The planned circulator route would connect the Chuckanut transit center and Burlington Boulevard corridor to the City's westerly residential areas, library, senior center, eastside commercial area. Long term, the frequency of service of service will need to be increased along the route 208 (Burlington Boulevard/Riverside Drive) corridor to support the existing and planned development as well as the City's goal of increasing transit ridership.

6.3.11 Water

The Skagit Public Utility District (PUD) provides water service within the City of Burlington and throughout Skagit County. In addition to meeting the domestic water needs of Burlington's residents, businesses, and public facilities, PUD also installs and maintains fire hydrants and ensures that adequate water capacity and pressure are available for firefighting purposes.

The 2021 Skagit PUD Coordinated Water System Plan provides more a detailed summary of the PUD water system, funding sources, demand projections, and capital plans. The growth forecasts included in the Coordinated Water System Plan are consistent with the projects adopted by the City of Burlington and Skagit County. Importantly, the plan indicates that PUD will have sufficient water rights and capacity to meet the City's needs through the year 2036.

6.3.12 Flood Protection

Dike District 12 (DD-12) provides flood protection infrastructure in the City of Burlington and surrounding areas. Structural flood protection measures in the City consist of a levee system along Skagit River and a pump station used to regulate water levels in Gages Slough. A more

detailed description of the City's existing and planned flood protection measures is provided in the Natural Resources Element (Chapter 4).

DD-12 has a long range plan to improve the Skagit River levee system through a program of levees setbacks and improvements. Through the year 2023 DD-12 is focused on completing a major levee improvement upstream of Gardner Road. Future improvements are planned along the remainder of the Skagit River corridor through the City of Burlington by the year 2036. DD-12 indicates that the City's projected growth will not create any capital facility impacts. The Dike District's work is funded by a dedicated property tax levy.

The City currently supports DD-12's efforts by limiting development near levees and concentrating growth within the City's established UGA, thereby limiting the size of the urban area requiring flood protection, making the construction of levees easier, and enabling emergency flood fighting efforts and levee repairs. As noted in the Natural Resources Element the City has questions regarding the viability and impacts of the DD-12's long term plans. The City supports a regional approach to floodplain management that fully accounts for benefits and impacts associated with structural flood protection measures. Moving forward, DD-12 will need to complete a detailed capital plan, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, in order to receive permits or zoning approvals.

6.3.13 Municipal Court

The Burlington Municipal Court is a court of limited jurisdiction, hearing cases involving misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors, traffic and parking violations, and domestic violence protection orders. The Municipal Court is also responsible for hearing various other cases involving violations of the Burlington Municipal Code and processing passport applications. The Court employs a Court Administrator and two Court Clerks. Skagit County provides a Judge and probation services under contract. The Municipal Court is not planning any capital improvements and no expansions have been identified to accommodate the City's projected growth.

6.3.14 Transportation and Streets

A summary of transportation related expenses and potential revenue sources is provided below. A detailed description of the City's future transportation needs is included in the Transportation Element and a list of each proposed project with associated cost estimates is included in Volume II.

Arterial street projects are funded through a combination of grants and Regional Transportation Funding Organization (RTPO) funds. The most common source of grant funds is the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the State Surface Transportation Board. Generally the City is required to contribute a 15 percent match for grant funded projects. Over an eight-year period between 2012 and 2019 the City collected approximately $17.15 million in transportation grant funds. This equates to an average of $2,143,750 of grant funding on a

yearly basis, suggesting a total $45,018,750 in grant funding will be available through the year 2036.

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) revenue and transportation impact fees are also a sources of revenue used to fund transportation projects. On an annual basis the City typically allocates $250,000 in REET funds for transportation projects, which equates to a total revenue stream of $5.25 million through the year 2036. Based on the City's projected population and employment growth, the City can expect to collect approximately $895,896 per year in transportation impact fees, resulting in a total revenue stream of $18,813,822 through the year 2036.

The Transportation Element identifies a total of $97,247,364 in transportation projects through the year 2036. Of this total, $19.43 million are projects involving Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDTO) facilities that WSDOT may be partially or fully responsible for. A large portion, $85,447,364 of the transportation improvements involve projects necessary to support the City's planned development and projected increase in population and employment. These projects are eligible for impact fee funding.

Table 6.6 – Transportation Funding Summary

Funding Source	Yearly Revenue	21-Year Revenue (2015 -2036)
Grants	$2,143,750	$45,018,750
Impact Fees	$895,896	$18,813,822
REET	$250,000	$5,250,000
Total	***$3,289,349***	***$69,082,572***

Table 6.7 – Local Project Expenses (2015 – 2036)

Impact Fee Eligible	$71,017,364
Not Impact Fee Eligible	$6,800,000
Total	***$77,817,364***

Table 6.8 – WSDOT Partnership Expenses (2015 – 2036)

Impact Fee Eligible	$14,430,000
Not Impact Fee Eligible	$5,000,000
Total	***$19,430,000***

Table 6.9– Total Costs and Funding Gap Local Projects Only (2015 – 2036)

Total Estimated Expenses	$77,817,364
Total Estimated Revenue	$69,082,572
Difference	**($8,734,792)**

Table 6.9– Total Costs and Funding Gap with WSDOT Projects (2015 – 2036)

Total Estimated Expenses	$97,298,581
Total Estimated Revenue	$69,082,572
Difference	**($28,216,009)**

6.4 Goals and Policies

The goals and policies in this section will guide future investments in publicly owned facilities, coordinate and inform the provision of public services, and coordinate the actions of public agencies and private utility providers. These goals and policies are also intended to ensure consistency with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The bold headings below identify the City's goals for public facilities and services. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington, and by other government agencies, shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

6.4.1 Consistency and Coordination: Capital investments can be a powerful tool for shaping the City's form and achieving the goals of the comprehensive plan. At the same time, ill-considered public investments may not achieve the City's goals, or, in some cases, may actually undermine the City's ability to implement the comprehensive plan. Because the City relies on other public agencies to provide important services, such as education, transit, and flood control, coordination and cooperative planning are essential. All capital planning decisions made by public agencies in the City of Burlington will be reviewed for consistency with the comprehensive plan.

1. All public agencies operating in the City of Burlington shall maintain detailed capital plans covering a period of at least six years. These capital plans shall be updated annually, be based on the population and employment projections adopted by the City, and be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

2. In order to ensure a high level of coordination between public agencies, the Community Development Department will annually contact public agencies to solicit updated capital plans and discuss upcoming capital improvement projects or major service changes. The following methods may be used to ensure capital plans prepared by a public agencies are up-to-date and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. A "conforming capital plan" is a plan that has been reviewed and approved by the City as being consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

    a. Zoning. Land shall only be assigned a PFT or PC designation if the agency or department requesting the designation or proposing a public project has adopted a conforming capital plan;

    b. Permits. Capital projects will only be considered permitted uses and granted permits if they are identified in a conforming capital plan;

    c. Funding. No impact fees shall be collected, and no City funds or resources shall be used to support a capital project unless the project is identified in a conforming capital plan;

d. Formal Support. The City will not formally endorse, or support, and may actively oppose, capital projects that are not identified in conforming capital plan.

3. In order to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan, the following order of priorities shall be used to guide investments in, and the provision of, public facilities and services:

    a. Maintaining existing capital facilities;

    b. Replacing and upgrading deficient capital facilities;

    c. Providing new capital facilities or additional capacity to support development in Priority Development Areas;

    d. Providing new capital facilities or additional capacity to support development in other areas of the City;

    e. Providing new capital facilities or additional capacity to support the annexation and development of the City's unincorporated UGA;

    f. Providing new capital facilities or additional capacity to facilitate the expansion of the City's UGA, but only if there are no other reasonable alternatives to accommodate projected population and employment growth.

4. City services, capital infrastructure, or other resources shall not be used to facilitate urban growth or intensive levels of development beyond, or outside of, existing established urban growth areas.

5. Except in limited circumstances, urban services, such as sanitary sewer, shall not be extended to serve properties in the City's unincorporated UGA prior to annexation.

6. The Skagit County Health Department shall not issue permits for new septic systems or authorize the repair of existing septic systems without prior written approval from the City of Burlington. The Skagit County Health Department shall promptly report any septic systems failures to the City.

6.4.2 Value and Cost Effectiveness: Maximize the return on public investments, in terms of the benefits delivered.

1. Adopt level of service standards and detailed capital plans for all capital intensive programs such as transportation, sewer, water, stormwater, City facilities, transit service, education, parks, flood control, and fire protection. Revenue generation and service needs should be

monitored on an ongoing basis and capital plans shall be refined and improved as additional information becomes available.

2. Ensure new public facilities and capital investments incorporate efficiency measures that reduce water and energy consumption and gradually upgrade existing facilities and infrastructure. Consider the use of energy efficient lighting, HVAC systems, solar power, and electric vehicles.

3. Design public facilities and infrastructure with a long term view to reduce future repair, maintenance, and servicing costs, and to protect public investments from natural disasters and other hazards.

4. Implement demand management and efficiency strategies that reduce or eliminate the need for expensive public infrastructure, such as:

    a. Land use plans that concentrate development in areas where infrastructure and services are already available;

    b. Manage stormwater and mitigate flood risks by incorporating low impact development (LID) measures, protecting existing water courses, and restoring natural flood and stormwater storage areas;

    c. Implementing fee structures and utility pricing strategies that encourage conservation and discourage the wasteful use of scare public resources;

    d. Where possible satisfying service demands by shifting to less costly alternatives;

    e. Partnering with other public agencies and private organizations to ensure existing facilities are fully utilized before constructing new facilities and to share facilities and resources;

    f. Before constructing or expanding facilities or buildings assess the capacity and suitability of existing buildings and facilities. The adaptive reuse of existing buildings and facilities should be prioritized over the construction of new buildings or additions.

6.4.5 Funding: Adequately fund the facilities and services needed to support the City's projected population and employment growth using funding sources that do no disproportionately burden those who are least able to pay.

1. Impacts fees should be used to substantially offset the cost of growth related park, fire, transportation, and school impacts. The City will seek to cover 80 percent of growth related capital costs through impact fee collections.

2. New development shall incorporate onsite improvements necessary to support the development, maintain established levels of service, and contribute to, and function as part of, the City's broader infrastructure system.

3. Require mitigation in form of offsite improvements or financial contributions when development will cause system impacts that negatively affect established level of service standards.

4. Strategically pool existing revenue sources and consider the expanded use of bonding to investment potential.

5. Aggressively pursue available grant opportunities and take actions to ensure the City is well positioned to compete for scare grant funding sources.

6. Consider establishing an impact fee waiver or reduction program for projects that provide critical public benefits, such as housing for low income households.

7. Growth in unincorporated Skagit County can financially impact the City of Burlington. Such impacts are most pronounced for services, such as EMS, provided by the City, but also affect the demand for transportation and parks. The City will work with Skagit County to mitigate the impacts associated with growth in unincorporated areas by considering options such as:

    a. Impact fee revenue sharing for EMS, parks, and transportation;

    b. Pursuing agreements that limit growth in unincorporated Skagit County outside of established urban growth areas;

    c. Promoting land use policies that limit growth in unincorporated Skagit County and direct development to established cities and urban growth areas.

6.5 Implementation

The City will implement the Public Facilities and Services Element through long range capital planning, establishing level of service standards, and through its development review and permitting functions. This plan creates a system for continuously assessing capital facility needs and adjusting land use plan, regulations, and revenue sources as needed. The policies in this section are intended to create a mechanism for aligning the capital plans of public agencies with the Burlington Comprehensive Plan.

6.5.1 Capital Planning

The City will coordinate and manage a long range capital planning program for all capital projects carried out by public agencies in the City of Burlington. As part of the of this effort, public agencies, including both City departments and outside agencies, with capital intensive programs will be asked to prepare, and annually update, detailed capital plans covering at least a six year period. These plans will be reviewed for consistency with the comprehensive plan. A capital plan that has been reviewed and approved shall be considered a “conforming plan”.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate capital plan provided by public agencies:

1. Elements of the plan that relate to population or employment growth, such as student enrollment, travel demand, or water use, shall be based on, and clearly cite, the City’s adopted population and employment projections;

2. Capital plans shall establish clear, quantifiable, and easily monitored level of service standards;

3. The impacts of projected population and employment growth shall be quantified and any capital improvements necessary to support the population and employment growth shall be clearly identified;

4. If new land will be needed to accommodate new capital projects an analysis shall be provided identifying the approximately location and characteristics of the property;

5. Capital plans shall be fully consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

6.5.2 Plan Approval Process

Capital plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission and City Council annually following a recommendation from the City's Community Development Department. Table 6.10 illustrates the programs subject to capital planning requirements and their approval status.

Conforming Plans have not been approved by the City of Burlington for the Housing Authority, Dike District 12, or the Burlington Edison School District. Dike District 12 and the Housing Authority have not submitted plans for review. The capital plan submitted by the Burlington Edison School District does meaningfully account for the City's projected population and housing growth and has not been deemed conforming. These agencies are not eligible for permits or City funding until conforming capital plans have been submitted and approved.

Table 6.10 - Status of Capital Plans

Program	Agency/Department	Plan Title	Year Adopted	Conforming (Y/N)
Transportation	City/Public Works	Burlington Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	2023	Yes
Sewer	City/Public Works	Wastewater Comprehensive Plan	2023	Yes
Water	Skagit PUD	Water System Plan and Limited Water System Plan Update	2013 and 2021	Yes
Stormwater	City/Public Works	Surfacewater Management Plan	Unknown	Yes
Transit	Skagit Transit	Six-Year Transit Development Plan		Yes
Fire	City/Fire Department	Burlington Comprehensive Plan & Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan	2023	Yes
Parks	City/Parks Department	Parks Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan	2020	Yes
Education	School District	Capital Improvement Plan	2016	No - plan does not address City's projected population growth
City Facilities	City/Public Works	Burlington Comprehensive Plan & Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan	2023	Yes
Housing	Housing Authority	N/A	N/A	No – no plan submitted
Flood Control	Dike District	N/A	N/A	No – no plan submitted

7 Parks and Recreation

7.1 Introduction

The Parks and Recreation Element is intended to ensure that people living and working in Burlington have convenient access to parks and ensure the City's most important open space areas are preserved. It shows where new parks and open space areas will be located, describes park improvements and upgrades that are planned through the year 2036, and provides guidance on the management and operation of existing facilities.

Parks and open space areas provide essential functions including storm-water management, flood control, wildlife habitat, and transportation. Parks enhance the health of residents who live in densely populated areas by providing outdoor living space and opportunities for physical activity and socialization. Parks also serve an important economic role by attracting visitors, making the City an attractive place to work and do business, and enhancing property values.

The cost of maintaining and upgrading aging facilities, coupled with constrained revenue sources will make maintaining existing facilities and meeting the needs of future users challenging. Rather than focusing on the development of new facilities, this plan envisions improving existing programs and facilities to accommodate more users and concentrating development in areas close to existing parks. The City will also partner with other agencies and organizations to provide specialized services and ensure the benefits of existing investments are maximized.

The primary objectives of the Parks and Recreation Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Maximize the use of existing parks and facilities.** Future park and recreation demands imposed by new growth will be primarily met by upgrading and modifying existing parks to accommodate new users. Housing and job growth will be directed to existing built up areas with convenient access to existing parks and accommodated through infill and redevelopment.

- **Ensuring financial sustainability.** The park system will be managed and expanded in a way that considers both immediate and long term financial implications. Partnerships will be developed with other agencies and organizations, and investments that provide the broadest range of benefits will be prioritized.

- **Improving access.** In the future it will be easier to get to parks using trails, paths, and other similar improvements. Signs, maps, and other information showing the location of parks, paths, and trails will be widely available.

7.2 Current Conditions and Future Needs

7.2.1 Inventory

Burlington has 20 parks and recreational facilities encompassing approximately 173 acres. This includes 144 acres of developed park land and 29 undeveloped acres. The majority of the undeveloped land is managed for conservation, flood control, or storm-water management purposes. At 116 acres Skagit River Park is the largest park in the city and serves as a facility for regional and statewide events. In addition to these facilities, the City's three public schools contribute an additional 64 acres of open space, as well as athletic fields and playgrounds that are open to the public during non-school hours. Diking District 12 also owns a significant amount of open space, primarily along the Skagit River corridor. The Dike District's property includes trails and open space areas.

The City's parks are grouped into five classifications based on their size, intended service area, and features.

- **Regional Parks –** These parks draw users from a broad area outside of the City. They typically have unique facilities, are capable of hosing large events, and are 100 acres or larger. In addition to meeting the needs of local residents they are also intended to serve an important economic development function by attracting visitor.

- **Community Parks –** Community parks serve a city-wide area, provide a broad range of specialized facilities, are used to host important community events. Typically community parks are five acres or larger.

- **Neighborhood Parks –** These are small pedestrian oriented parks that serve the needs of individual neighborhoods. Neighborhoods parks typically include minimal facilities, such as play equipment and picnic tables. Since these parks are intended to serve the immediate surrounding area they typically oriented to pedestrian and bicycle access and have limited parking facilities.

- **Linear Parks and Open Space –** This category includes trails, paths, and open space areas managed for conservation, flood control, or storm-water management purposes. These properties are generally reserved for passive recreation and environmental conservation purposes.

- **Special Use Facilities –** This category includes Parks Department buildings, support facilities, and properties with a unique, or specialized, function, such as the Burlington Cemetery.

Table 7. 1 – Inventory of Parks and Recreation Facilities		
Name	**Size**	**Comments**
Regional Parks		
Skagit River Park	134 acres (with Dike District property)	• Hosts regional sports tournaments • R/C race tracks • Pea-Patch Gardens
Skagit River Boat Launch	11 acres	• Paved boat launch
Subtotal:	***145 acres***	
Community Parks		
Maiben Park	6.5 acres	• Basketball/tennis courts • Spray park • Playground equipment
Rotary Park	10 acres	• Sand volleyball courts • Baseball fields • Skate park
Subtotal:	***16.5 acres***	
Neighborhood Parks		
Alpha Park	0.11 acres/4,795 sq. ft.	• Picnic tables • Annual holiday tree lighting
Country Aire Park	0.23 acres/9,834 sq. ft.	• Playground
Grafton Park	0.52 acres/22,651 sq. ft.	
Jack Doyle Memorial Park	2.5 acres	• Picnic table
Jason Boerner Memorial Park	1.01 acres	• Playground
Subtotal:	***4.37 acres***	
Linear Parks & Multiuse Paths		
SR-20 Trail and Lions Park	0.83 miles and 2.3 acres	• Barbeque grill • RV dump station • Total length 1.7 miles (0.87 miles located outside the City of Burlington)
Old Highway 99 & Burlington Blvd	1.07 miles	
Tammi Wilson (Gages Slough) Trail	0.4 miles	
Walnut Pond	0.2 miles	
Rivers Edge Trail	0.33 miles	
Burlington High School	0.7 miles	
Dike Trail	2.27 miles	
Sharon Street Path	0.05 miles (254 feet)	
Subtotal	***5.85 miles & 2.23 acres***	
Special Use Areas		
Maiben House	N/A – located in Maiben Park	
Park Shop	9.3 acres	
Parks and Recreation Building	1.38 acres	
Senior Center/Community Center	N/A – located in Parks Building	
Railroad Park/ Information Center	1.26 acres	
Cemetery	10.8 acres	
Burlington Hill	3.7 acres	Undeveloped open space
subtotal:	***26.44 acres***	
Total Park Area		
Total:	***194.54 acres/5.85 miles***	

7.2.2 Programs and Activities

In addition to physical park facilities the City also hosts community events and provides a variety of classes, camps, and programs, including youth programs and camps. Over the past six years the number of programs offered by the City has declined while the number of attendees or users has risen or remained constant.

7.2.3 Level of Service Standards

A Level of service (LOS) standard is way of describing a community's minimum expectations for public services and facilities. For park and recreation facilities, LOS standards are typically expressed as a quantity in relation to population. Given the City's large employment base and dense concentration of retail businesses, Burlington's LOS standards for parks are expressed as a "residential equivalent" (RE). The demand associated with each additional person working in the city is roughly equivalent to half the demand created by each new resident (45.9 percent).

The City has established the following LOS standards using the RE factor:

- Parks: 0.00977 acres per resident equivalent
- Trails and multi-use paths: 0.000416 miles per resident equivalent

7.2.4 Future Needs

Burlington's current population is 10,464 and approximately 9,896 people work in the City. Over the next 20 years the City's population will grow by 3,808 people and 3,516 jobs will be added to the local economy. Based on the adopted level of service standards, this growth will create a need for 34.73 acres of developed park land and 2.04 miles of trails and multi-use paths. As shown below in table 7.2 the City currently has 24.42 acres of developed park land and 2.3 miles of trails. Based on the LOS standards discussed above, the City has more than enough trail mileage to meet current and future needs. However, the City has a current deficit of 1.09 acres of developed park land and an additional 10.31 acres will be needed to meet future needs.

Table 7.2 - Future Needs and Level of Service Requirements

	2016 Inventory	2016 LOS Requirement	2036 LOS Requirement	Total Amount Needed for 2036 LOS
Developed Parks	194.6 acres	146.6[1)]	199.6 acres	4.36 acres
Trails	5.85	6.24 miles[(2)]	8.49 miles	2.64 miles

Notes: (1) As of 2016 the City meets the established level of service standard for number of acres; however, the needs approximately five neighborhood or linear parks to meet the goal of having parks within one-quarter mile of all residents and workers. (2) As of 2016 the City meets the established level of service standard for miles of trail; however, all of the trails and multiuse paths identified in Parks and Recreation Element and Transportation Element are needed to provide adequate network access for the City's planned development.

7.3 Parks and Recreation Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies are intended to ensure the City's park system, open space areas and recreation program needs are met. These goals and policies are based on, and consistent with, the goals and policies identified in the City's Parks and Recreation Plan. The bold headings below identify the City's goals related to parks and recreation. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved.

7.3.1 Capacity: Over the next 20 years the City is expected to add 3,808 residents and 3,516 jobs. Most, if not all, of this growth will be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries. At the same time, the percentage of attached housing units, such as townhomes, apartments, and condominiums, is expected to increase from 48 percent to 60 percent. This growth is expected to increase the demand for parks and recreation programs. This demand will be accommodated efficiently and cost effectively by increasing the accessibility and capacity of existing parks, and to a lesser extent, by developing new facilities.

1. Increase the number of people living and working near parks by allowing higher residential and employment densities in areas within walking distance of parks, trails, and open space areas.

2. Enlarge the effective service area and allow more people to access the City's existing parks by constructing trails, paths, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian improvements that connect parks to residential and commercial areas.

3. New park capacity should be added first in underserved areas that are not within walking distance of an existing park.

4. Urban growth area expansions and annexations shall not be approved unless a financially feasible plan is developed to maintain existing levels of service and provide new park facilities in the expansion area without compromising the City's ability to serve existing areas.

5. Major public projects shall incorporate improvements that address the City's park, open space, and active transportation needs.

6. Support the City's position as destination for regional sporting events and as a gateway to the North Cascades Highway by expanding the number, and capacity, of RV pump out stations.

7.3.2 Access and Inclusion: Large areas of the City have convenient access to parks and recreation facilities, but significant gaps remain. Also, many of the City's parks cannot be easily accessed by pedestrians or bicyclists. Access to parks will be particularly important as additional growth occurs in the commercial core where little public open space exists. Over the next twenty years the City will increase the percentage of the City's land area and population base that can access a park within a one-quarter mile walking distance.

1. Priority should be given to constructing non-motorized transportation facilities including, trails, paths, bicycle lanes, crosswalks, and sidewalks that provide access to public facilities, major attractions, and link parks and open space areas together.

2. New developments adjacent to, or near, existing parks should be provide pedestrian access to the park.

3. Parks and recreation facilities should be designed, operated, and maintained to provide access and opportunity for all members of the community regardless of age or disability. Take steps to reduce social, language, or financial barriers that may limit accessibility.

4. Develop and implement a consistent signage program for parks, linear open space areas, and paths.

5. Conduct a detailed study to identify areas of the City that lack a park within walking distance and potential locations for new neighborhood or linear parks.

6. Make urban design and streetscape improvements in the City's Priority Development Areas such as pocket parks, plazas, landscaped medians and planter strips, and enhanced street frontage landscaping.

7.3.3 Conservation and Environmental Management: While much of the City has been extensively developed, a number of large habitat blocks and important ecological features remain, including Gages Slough, Burlington Hill, and the Skagit River Corridor. In many cases preserving land in theses area provides multiple overlapping public benefits including opportunities for walking and wildlife viewing, flood control, storm-water management, and the preservation of natural hydrologic processes. Over the next 20 years the City will incrementally expand the amount of publicly owned or controlled land in the special management areas.

1. Prioritize the acquisition of land and easement rights in the Gages Slough special management area that achieve multiple overlapping public benefits including access, wetland restoration, storm-water management, and flood control.

2. Parks shall be designed and managed to enhance and protect critical areas.

3. Parks and open space areas that contain wetlands or wetland buffers shall not be sold or otherwise made available for private development.

4. Impacts to wetland and wetland buffers on publicly owned parks or open space areas shall be offset on a one for one basis by acquiring additional land to protect wetlands and wetland buffers.

7.3.5 Maintenance: Park maintenance and repairs will be prioritized over new developments.

1. Financial plans and projections shall be produced when considering the addition of new parks and trails. These plans and projections must clearly identify short term costs, such as acquisition and development activities, and long term expenses, such maintenance and operations. Parks and trails will only be added or developed when sufficient resources are available to cover the short and long term expenses.

2. Prioritize maintenance activities that reduce the need for costly repairs.

3. Maintain parks and open space areas using practices that conserve water and energy, utilize integrated pest management, and protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and wetlands.

7.3.6 Health and Physical Activity: Many health benefits are associated with physical activity and access to open space. In order to promote health and wellness the City will take actions to increase the number of people engaging in regular physical activity, tree cover will be increased, and parks and transportation improvements will be provided so that all residents and employees have a park within walking distance of their home or workplace.

1. Special consideration shall be given to permitting more intensive residential development near parks and recreation facilities.

2. Create a system of multi-use paths that connect park and open space areas together and permit easier access to parks.

3. Support programs that promote health and wellness and allow residents of all ages and abilities to engage in regular physical activity.

4. Promote the benefits of an active lifestyle through partnerships with other public agencies such as the Burlington Edison School District and the Skagit County Public Health Department.

7.3.7 Financial Sustainability: The City's parks and open space areas represent major investments. While adding new facilities creates additional benefits, new facilities also create ongoing maintenance and operations expenses. In evaluating potential park improvements the City will prioritize investments that serve the largest number of people at the lowest cost.

1. When possible, transportation and park money should be pooled to facilitate the construction of trails, multi-use paths, and pedestrian improvements that provide overlapping transportation and recreation benefits.

2. Actively seek partnerships with other agencies and organizations to improve efficiency, minimize redundant efforts, and provide access to specialized programs and facilities.

3. Evaluate potential funding sources for park and recreation services that would provide a stable and dedicated revenue stream. In particular the creation of Transportation Benefit District (TBD) should be evaluated to fund trails and multiuse paths and to allow more REET revenue to be directed to park projects.

4. Conduct a study of park funding options and develop a detailed funding strategy and impact fee program.

5. The following order of priorities should generally be used to guide the acquisition and development of new parks, trails, and open space areas:

    a. Multi-use paths, trails, and open space linkages between existing parks, public services and major attractions;

    b. Open space land that provides multiple overlapping public benefits including storm-water management, flood control, wetland protection, and wildlife habitat;

    c. New parks and recreation facilities within the City's existing municipal boundaries that serve underserved areas;

    d. New parks and recreation facilities needed to serve annexations and urban growth area expansions, but only when associated with a long term financial plan showing how the associated costs will be addressed.

7. Funding

Through the year 2036 the City estimates that $10,402,335 will be available to fund park projects. At the same time, the total cost of the park projects identified in this plan is estimated to be $56,298,581, resulting in a funding gap of approximately $45,896,246. In order to address the gap the City should explore potential cost savings or new revenue sources. A detailed analysis of project costs and potential funding sources is provided in the Capital Facilities Element and Volume II.

8 Transportation

8.1 Introduction

The Transportation Element describes how people will get around in the future. It describes the street, sidewalk, and transit improvements needed over the next 20 years, identifies the cost of making the improvements, and explains how they will be paid for.

In the past, much of the City's growth occurred on undeveloped sites and the City gradually expanded to incorporate new land. Transportation needs were met by directing traffic to a small number of streets and increasing the size and capacity of a few key corridors, notably Burlington Boulevard. This strategy is no longer viable. Future growth will largely be accommodated through infill and redevelopment, resulting in a need for a more adaptable and well connected transportation system.

The City's focus will shift to eliminating gaps in the street network, reducing travel distances for drivers and other road users, and making it easier to walk, bicycle, or ride the bus. Land use policies will also be changed to increase the amount of development occurring in centrally located areas near commercial services. Overall these changes are intended to meet the City's transportation needs in a cost effective manner, enhance the economy by accommodating new forms of development, and improve the health and safety of those living and working in Burlington.

The primary objectives of the Transportation Element can be summarized as follows:

- **Convenience and access.** New connections will be constructed to provide access to isolated parts of the City and provide redundancy. New development will contribute to, and become a part of, the City's street network. Over time these changes will reduce the distance between where people are, and where they want to go.

- **Supporting new forms of development.** Transportation and land use plans will work together to bring people and destinations closer together. Land use changes will be made to promote a greater mix of commercial and residential uses. Transportation improvements will facilitate the City's land use plan and make Burlington a more attractive place to live and do business.

- **Reducing costs.** The City will maintain its transportation system in a financially sustainable way. Ongoing maintenance expenses will be considered when making new investments. Individual household expenses related to transportation will be minimized by reducing the distance people must travel and by making it possible to drive less or own fewer cars if they choose.

8.2 Current Conditions

8.2.1 Streets and Sidewalks

There are approximately 56 miles of roadway within the Burlington Urban Growth Area, including 5 miles of state highways, 35 miles of city streets, and 21 miles of county road and private streets. Of this total approximately 48 miles are located within the City of Burlington, with the balance located in the unincorporated UGA. City streets are classified into four groups depending on their characteristics and intended purposes. These groups include:

- Major/Principal Arterials (1.86 miles)
- Secondary/Minor Arterials (5.59 miles)
- Collector Arterials (9.7 miles)
- Local Access Streets (17.85 miles)

Currently only 36 percent of the City's street network consists of streets with fully improved right-of-way, including curbs, gutters, sidewalks on both sides, and storm-water infrastructure. Approximately one third of Burlington's streets have only limited improvements and 32 percent have no curbs, sidewalks, or formal storm-water infrastructure. There are no streets in the unincorporated UGA that are improved to urban standards; however, Lafayette Road is currently being improved from Monroe Street to the Skagit County Housing Authority's property at Farmview Lane.

Table 8.1 - Existing Road and Sidewalk Conditions

	Municipal Boundaries	Unincorporated UGA
Fully Improved	17.38 miles (36%)	0.0 miles
Limited Improvements	14.9 miles (31%)	1.36 miles (16%)
Pavement Only	15.27 miles (32%)	6.54 miles (79%)
Unimproved (dirt or gravel)	0.20 miles (1%)	0.38 miles (5%)
Total:	**47.75 miles**	**8.28 miles**

How well a street network functions is to a large degree determined by how well connected it is. A street system with a high level of connectivity will allow shorter trips and more redundancy in the event a route is blocked. A street system comprised of a high density of streets which connect at regular, and frequent, intervals will have a high level of connectivity. Alternatively, dead ends, cul-de-sacs, and looping streets contribute to poor connectivity.

Burlington's historic downtown area has the highest level of connectivity in the City and is characterized by a uniform pattern of small blocks measuring 330' X 220'. The level of street connectivity in the Commercial Core and Northern Gateway growth areas varies dramatically. Importantly Burlington Boulevard is the only continuous corridor in this area making transportation in the most intensively developed portion of the City prone to disruption. Also, the Burlington Northern right-of-way is a significant barrier to east-west travel, resulting in poor connectivity between the residential areas east of the rail line and the commercial areas along

Burlington Boulevard. The outlying areas of the City and the unincorporated UGA have the lowest levels of connectivity.

Table 8.2 Burlington Boulevard Intersection Spacing		
Status	**Distance**	**Street Segment**
Meets Goal	579 feet	Rio Vista – Sharon
Meets Goal	592 feet	Pump Drive – Cascade Place
Meets Goal	587 feet	Costco Drive – George Hopper
Acceptable	903 feet	I-5 - Kirkby
Acceptable	849 feet	Kirkby – Avon
Acceptable	830 feet	Avon – Fairhaven
Acceptable	901 feet	Gilkey – Pump Drive
Acceptable	950 feet	Cascade Place – Pease Road
Poor	1,300 feet	Fairhaven – Rio Vista
Poor	1,850 feet	Sharon – Gilkey
Poor	1,215 feet	Pease Road – Costco Drive
Poor	1,166 feet	George Hopper – Market Place Drive
Average Distance:	***977 feet***	

Table 8.3 Local Arterial Intersection Conditions		
Location	**2016 Level of Service**	**Status**
George Hopper Road & Bouslog Road	C	Pass
Spruce Street & Rio Vista Ave	D	Pass
Anacortes Street & Rio Vista Avenue	B	Pass
Whitmarsh Road & Pease Road	C	Pass
Skagit Street & Fairhaven Avenue	B	Pass
Burlington Boulevard & George Hopper Road	C	Pass
Burlington Boulevard & Pease Road	D	Pass
Spruce Street & Greenleaf Avenue	C	Pass

**Citywide level of service standard "D" - Source Transportation Solutions Inc. (TSI), 2017*

Table 8.4 WSDOT Intersection Conditions			
Location	**2016 Level of Service**	**2016 Level of Service**	**Status**
SR-20 & Spruce St		D	Pass
SR-20 & Avon Ave		E	Fail
SR-20 & Skagit St		F	Fail
SR-20 & Section St		F	Fail
SR-20 & Cherry St		D	Pass
SR-20 & Regent St		C	Pass

**WSDOT level of service standard "D" – Source Transportation Solutions Inc. (TSI), 2017*

While the City's transportation system functions relatively well, limited areas of heavy traffic exist. Currently level of service (LOS) "C" is used for all City streets, except Burlington Boulevard, where LOS D is used. State Highways are managed by the Washington State Department of Transportation and are subject to a LOS standard of "D". The City is required to assess traffic conditions on State Highways but is not responsible for ensuring that LOS standards are maintained. There are four intersections that do not meet current LOS standards, three of which are located along Highway 20 and are controlled by the Washington State Department of Transportation. The intersection of South Spruce Street and Rio Vista Avenue is

controlled by the City an currently operates a LOS “D”. This plan envisions lowering the LOS standard city-wide from “C” to “D”, which will eliminate this deficiency.

8.2.2 Non-Motorized Transportation

While only partially complete the City’s non-motorized transportation system includes a number of important routes. A paved multi-use path parallels the Old Highway 99/Burlington Boulevard corridor and extends from the Burlington Edison High School to the municipal boundary at Gear Road. This path connects the Burlington Edison High School to the Chuckanut Transit Station and may ultimately connect to regional path along State Route 20. The Tami Wilson Trail provides the only non-motorized crossing of I-5. It begins near the Cascade mall and follows Gages Slough a short distance before terminating at Steven Road. Another important non-motorized route is the SR-20 path which begins in Lions Park near Anacortes Street and extends past the municipal boundary, ending at District Line Road.

To serve the existing and projected population and workforce a network of multiuse paths and bike lanes will be needed. In order to provide an acceptable level of access and connectivity this network should provide bike lanes, trails, or multiuse paths at intervals of one-quarter mile (1,320 feet) or less. The current condition of the City’s non-motorized facilities is not sufficient to sufficient to accommodate the City’s planned development.

Table 8.5 Existing Non-Motorized Facilities			
Name/Location	**Type**	**Length**	**Comments**
Highway 99/ North Burlington Boulevard Path	Multi-Use Path	1.07 miles	• Paved surface • Connects to transit station and high school
Burlington Edison High School Trail	Multi-Use Path	0.7 miles	• Connects to Hwy 99/Burlington Blvd Path • Owned by School District
Tammi Wilson/Gages Slough	Multi-Use Path	0.4 miles	• Paved surface • Crosses I-5
SR-20 Trail	Multi-Use Path	0.83/1.7 miles (city/total)	• Paved surface • Extends from Anacortes Street past City limits to District Line Road • Connects to Dike Trail
Walnut Pond Trail	Park Trail	0.2 miles	
Rivers Edge Trail	Multiuse Path	0.33 miles	
Burlington High School Trail	Multiuse Path	0.7 miles	
Dike Trail	Multi-Use Path	2.27 miles	• Gravel Surface • Connects to Skagit River park • Owned by Dike District
Sharon Street Path	Multi-Use Path	0.05 miles/254 feet	• Gravel surface • Unopened right-of-way • Connects to Anacortes Street • Provide route to School
Section Street Bike Lane	Bike Lane	0.25 miles	• Connects to Rio Vista Bike Lane
Rio Vista Bike Lane	Bike Lane	0.25 miles	• Connects to Section Street Bike Lane
Garrett Road Bike Lane	Bike Lane	0.20 miles	

8.2.3 Transit Service

The Skagit Area Transit (SKAT) operates 19 bus routes, including six local routes, three commuter routes, and six primarily rural routes. Four routes originate in, or pass through, the City of Burlington, including route 80X which provides express commuter service from Bellingham to Mount Vernon, route 208 which connects Burlington and Mount Vernon and provides service along the Burlington Boulevard/Riverside Drive corridor, and routes serving the Anacortes and Sedro Woolley. Chuckanut Station, which includes a park and ride facility is a major hub for transit service in the City and provides convenient access to downtown Burlington and the Burlington Edison High School. SKAT route 208, which serves the Burlington Boulevard corridor, is the most productive bus route in Skagit County and accounts for nearly 24 percent of SKAT's total ridership.

Table 8.6 - Existing Transit Service			
Route	**Hours**	**Frequency**	**Serves**
80X	6:45 AM – 7:20 PM (weekday) 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM (weekends)	Hourly (weekdays) two hours (weekends)	Bellingham - Mount Vernon
208	6:20 AM – 8:15 PM (weekday) 8:15 AM – 5:45 PM (weekends)	30 minutes (weekdays/weekends)	Burlington – Mount Vernon
513	7:10 AM – 7:10 PM	Three hours (weekdays only)	Burlington - Anacortes
300	7:15 AM – 8:15 PM (weekdays) 8:15 AM – 5:15 PM (weekends)	Hourly (weekdays/weekends)	Burlington – Sedro Woolley

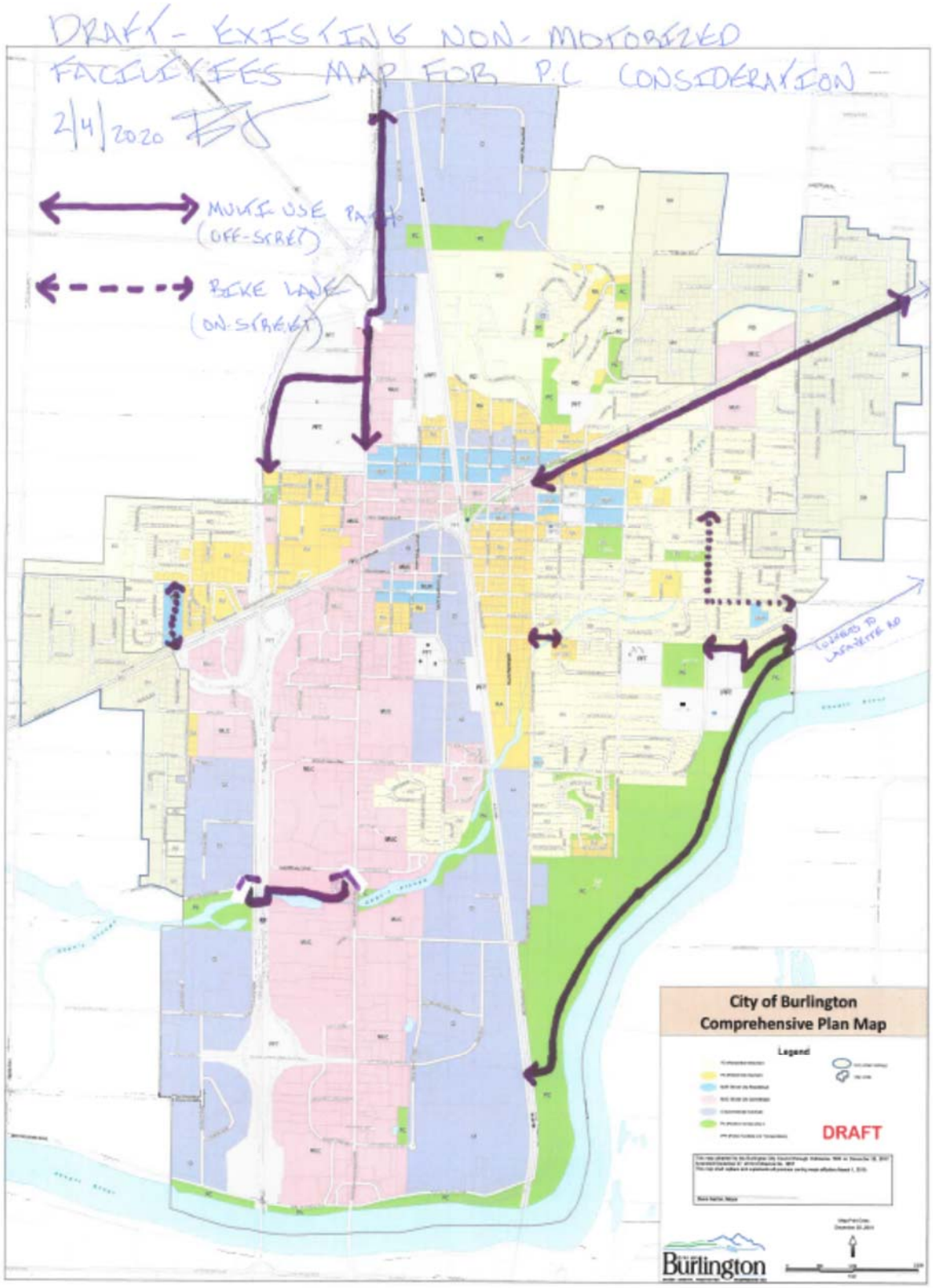
8.2.4 Other Transportation Services and Facilities

Two rail lines pass through the City of Burlington, including the BNSF mainline and a spur between Sedro Woolley and Anacortes. Currently BNSF provides freight service to a number of Burlington businesses and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) operates the Amtrak Cascades service between Eugene Oregon and Vancouver BC. While convenient access to rail service is an important asset. The presence of the rail lines, and numerous at grade crossing pose significant safety risks and create traffic problems. The BNSF bridge across the Skagit River is also aging and in need for replacement for safety, flood control, and capacity reasons.

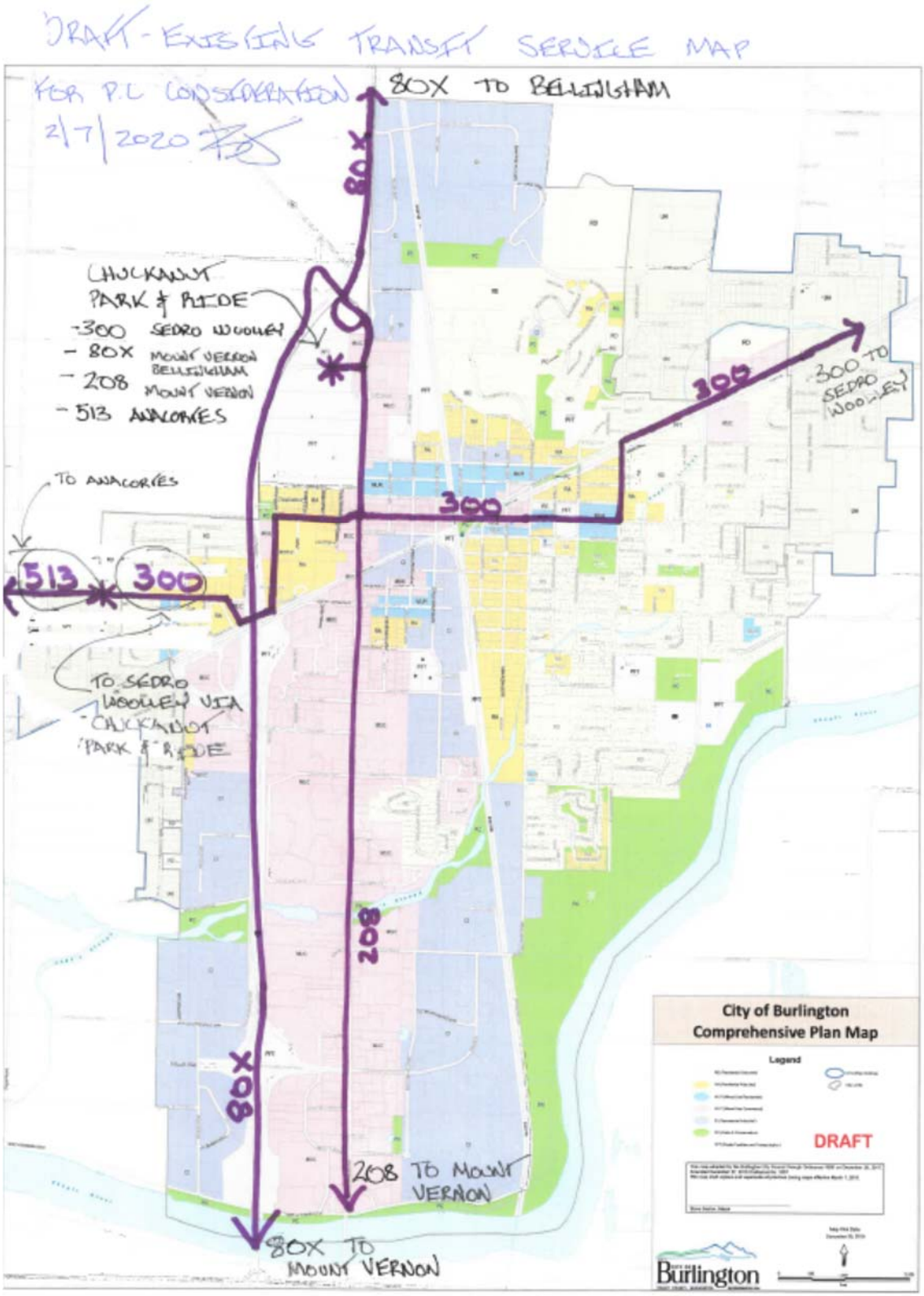
Other regional transportation options include ferry service and privately operated bus lines. Bellair Airporter bus line provides service between Bellingham and the SeaTac Airport with a stop in Burlington. WSDOT provides ferry Service between Anacortes, the San Juan Islands and Sydney BC and Skagit County operates a ferry between Anacortes and Guemes Island.

Map 8.1 Existing Street Classifications

Map 8.2 Existing Non-Motorized Transportation Facilities



Map 8.3 Existing Transit Service Map



8.3 Land Use Assumptions

Over the next 20 years the population is expected to increase by 3,808 and employment is expected to increase by 3,516, bringing the City's total population and employment to 14,272 and 13,412, respectively. As described in more detail in the Land Use Element, all of the projected growth is expected to be accommodated within the City's existing municipal boundaries. No UGA expansions are anticipated and growth will be accommodated through infill and redevelopment. Most of the City's commercial growth, and a large share of its residential growth, will occur along the Burlington Boulevard corridor in the Commercial Core and Northern Gateway Priority Development Areas.

The key land use assumptions affecting transportation are:

- Employment and residential densities will both increase significantly along the Burlington Boulevard corridor. The density of new residential development is expected to average 32 dwelling units per acre and non-residential densities are expected to reach 30 employees per acre.
- Residential densities will also increase in the Downtown growth area
- Car dealers, large format retailers and other uses drawing regional traffic will continue to develop on the west side of I-5. These uses will be prohibited or discouraged in other areas.
- Industrial developments and other similar uses will be clustered along the BNSF rail line in the Northern and Southern Industrial areas.

8.4 Level of Service Standards

A Level of service (LOS) standard is way of describing a community's minimum expectations for public services and facilities. With respect to the transportation system, LOS standards have been established to address the congestion, the completeness of the street network, and the quality of available transit service.

8.4.1 Street Improvements and Connectivity

1. Controlled intersections with pedestrian crossing improvements shall be provided at intervals of 600 feet or less along principle arterials. This standard is intended to help prioritize City projects and identify appropriate traffic mitigation measures for large scale developments.

2. For new development, block lengths shall not exceed 400 feet in residential areas or 600 feet in commercial areas. This standard should be incorporated into the City's development regulations, particularly for land divisions and new large scale developments. Minor

deviations from this standard are acceptable provided the goal of providing a dense network of fully connected streets is achieved.

3. All street segments shall include curbs, gutters, and sidewalks on both sides. This standard should be incorporated into the City's development regulations and be used to prioritize local street improvements.

8.4.2 Traffic Congestion and Intersection Delays

1. Intersections must function at service level of service "D" or better. This standard should be incorporated into the City's concurrency standards.

2. The State of Washington has adopted a level of service standard of "D" for highways of statewide significance, which includes SR-20 and I-5. The City is not obligated to improve WSDOT intersections or roads, but is required to track monitor the level of service.

8.4.3 Transit Service

1. Local arterial service will maintain peak hour headways of 30 minutes or better and off-peak headways of one hour or better. The City should work with Skagit Transit and the Skagit Council of Governments to ensure Skagit Transit's planned improvements are consistent with projected growth patterns and local comprehensive plans.

2. Intercity and regional express service headways shall be one hour or better during peak hours and every two hours in off-peak times. The City should work with Skagit Transit and the Skagit Council of Governments to ensure Skagit Transit's planned improvements are consistent with projected growth patterns and local comprehensive plans.

8.4.4 Non-Motorized Transportation

1. Provide a network of non-motorized transportation routes consisting of trails, multiuse paths, enhanced pedestrian amenities, or bike lanes, at intervals of one-quarter mile or less.

2. Ensure all parks, schools, public facilities, and transit centers have direct access to a non-motorized transportation route.

3. The mileage of non-motorized transportation routes should equal or exceed 0.000416 miles for each residential equivalent (RE).

8.5 Future Needs

8.5.1 Streets and Sidewalks

As shown below on table 8.1 the City has approximately 30.37 miles of streets that are not fully improved and lack curbs, gutters, sidewalks, storm-water infrastructure, or full width paving. This represents approximately 64 percent of the total street millage within the City's municipal boundaries. In order to address this backlog the City will need to develop a multiyear plan identify a dedicated local funding source.

Transportation improvements to serve new development are generally provided by the developer or funded through mitigation payments. As noted in this report the creation of a fully connected street network is essential. In order to ensure new developments contribute to, and become a part of, the City's transportation network, and changes should be made to the City's development regulations to discourage dead-end streets and looping discontinuous roads. New developments should be served by a grid of interconnected streets with intersections at frequent intervals. Also pedestrian and bicycle amenities should be incorporated into all new developments.

As shown on map 8.4, several new arterial street connections are planned to serve isolated areas of the City, improve emergency response times, and provide redundancy. These new connections include a railroad overpass, a new Gages Slough crossing, and a new north-south connection between George Hopper and Cascade Mall Drive. Capacity enhancements are limited to critical intersections and arterials street segments. Over the next 20 years three arterial intersections must be improved to maintain adopted level of service standards and four signalized intersections will be created to meet address the City's intersection spacing standards. By 2036 all five of WSDOT's intersections in the City of Burlington will fall below the State's minimum level of service. WSDOT intersections are not included on the list of planned improvements because they are managed by the State.

Table 8.7 Local Arterial Intersection Conditions in 2036

Location	2036 Level of Service	Status
George Hopper Road & Bouslog Road	D	Pass
Spruce Street & Rio Vista Avenue	D	Pass
Anacortes Street & Rio Vista Avenue	D	Pass
Whitmarsh Road & Pease Road	D	Pass
Skagit Street & Fairhaven Avenue	D	Pass
Burlington Boulevard & George Hopper Road	E	Fail
Burlington Boulevard & Pease Road	E	Fail
Spruce Street & Greenleaf Avenue	F	Fail

**Citywide level of service standard "D" - Source Transportation Solutions Inc. (TSI), 2017*

Table 8.8 WSDOT Intersection Conditions in 2036		
Location	**2036 Level of Service**	**Status**
SR-20 & Spruce Street	E	Fail (2036)
SR-20 & Avon Avenue	F	Fail (2016)
SR-20 & Skagit Street	F	Fail (2016)
SR-20 & Section Street	F	Fail (2016)
SR-20 & Cherry Street	F	Fail (2036)
SR-20 & Regent Street	E	Fail (2036)

**WSDOT level of service standard "D" – Source Transportation Solutions Inc. (TSI), 2017*

8.5.2 Non-Motorized Transportation

In order to facilitate the City's goal of establishing a grid of non-motorized routes at one-quarter mile intervals a number of improvements will be required including new multi-use paths, bike lanes, and enhanced pedestrian amenities. The non-motorized transportation plan is illustrated on map 8.5. This plan represents a demand management strategy that is intended to accommodate new land uses and development intensities in the City's core areas without the need for costly road capacity improvements. In addition this plan is intended to connect residential areas, schools, parks, and commercial areas consistent with goals and policies of the land use element, housing element, and parks and recreation element.

Serious walking conditions and safety issues are present along the SR-20 corridor between Burlington Boulevard and City's eastern boundary. Currently this stretch of highway lacks curbs, sidewalks, marked crosswalks, and controlled intersections. This City considers this section of highway to be deficient, unsafe, and a barrier to accommodating the City's planned development. In order to address the transportation and safety deficiencies effecting this section of highway the City has identified a program of improvements, including the construction of three new controlled intersections, a multiuse path, and continuous sidewalks.

SR-20 is operated by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Addressing the safety and transportation deficiencies along this corridor will require WSDOT's participation and cooperation. The improvements identified by the City may be necessary for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to meet its obligations under the State's "complete streets" requirements. The City of Burlington expects WSDOT to permit and fully or partially fund the completion of the SR-20 improvements identified in this plan.

8.5.3 Transit Service

Transit service is provided by Skagit Area Transit (SKAT) and the City has little direct control over SKAT's long range plans. However, the City will continue to lobby SKAT and its' regional planning partners to ensure new service is added to high demand corridors, particularly along Burlington Boulevard as necessary to ensure consistency with adopted land use plans. It is the City's position that SKAT should prioritize service improvements on urban routes with high ridership that serve areas with the greatest potential for population and employment growth, particularly the route 208, which serves Burlington and Mount Vernon along the Burlington Boulevard/Riverside Drive corridor. Under performing routes and rural routes with low ridership should be deprioritized or discontinued.

8.5.4 Summary of Future Needs

- Basic street improvements are needed. 30.37 miles of public and private streets lack fully improved right-of-way, including full width paving, sidewalks, and storm-water infrastructure. There are also 8.28 miles of deficient streets within the City's unincorporated urban growth area. These deficiencies would need to be addressed if land is annexed by the City.

- Traffic calming and safety improvements in residential areas are needed. Residents frequently express concerns about the need for sidewalks and traffic calming measures in residential areas to address speeding and unsafe walking conditions.

- New connections and access improvements are needed. Travelers in Burlington frequently experience delays caused by trains. Some areas of the City suffer from poor connectivity due to a lack of rail or water crossing, a lack of controlled intersections along busy arterials, or a lack of parallel or redundant routes.

- Arterial intersection delays must be addressed. By 2036 three of the City's arterial intersections will fall below the City's adopted level of services standard, and all of the intersections managed by WSDOT along the SR-20 corridor will fall below the state's adopted level of service standard.

- Future population and employment growth along the Burlington Boulevard corridor will create a need for more frequent transit service and expanded hours of operation. SKAT should consider expanding the frequency and hours of operation of the Route 208. SKAT should also consider establishing a circulator route within the City of Burlington.

8.6 Planned Improvements

As documented in the previous sections, improvements are needed to address existing deficiencies in the City's transportation system and accommodate future growth. The following project list has been developed to address to address these deficiencies. Projects are grouped into three categories, including:

- **Capacity:** Changes that are based on vehicle traffic and necessary to comply with Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) concurrency requirements. This category includes intersection controls, such as signal improvements and roundabouts, turning lanes, and other similar projects. All capacity projects are eligible for impact fee funding.

- **Supports Plan:** This category or projects includes street improvements, sidewalks, multiuse paths, and other improvements that are necessary to support the City's planned growth and development. Most projects in this category are part of a demand management strategy aimed and shifting demand to less expensive modes and transportation improvements. Projects in this category improve access to areas of the City that are difficult or time consuming to get to, facilitate development, improve emergency response times, or redundant routes to address blockages or delays from train traffic, accidents, or natural disasters. Most, but not all of the projects in this category are intended to address growth related impacts and are eligible for impact fee funding.

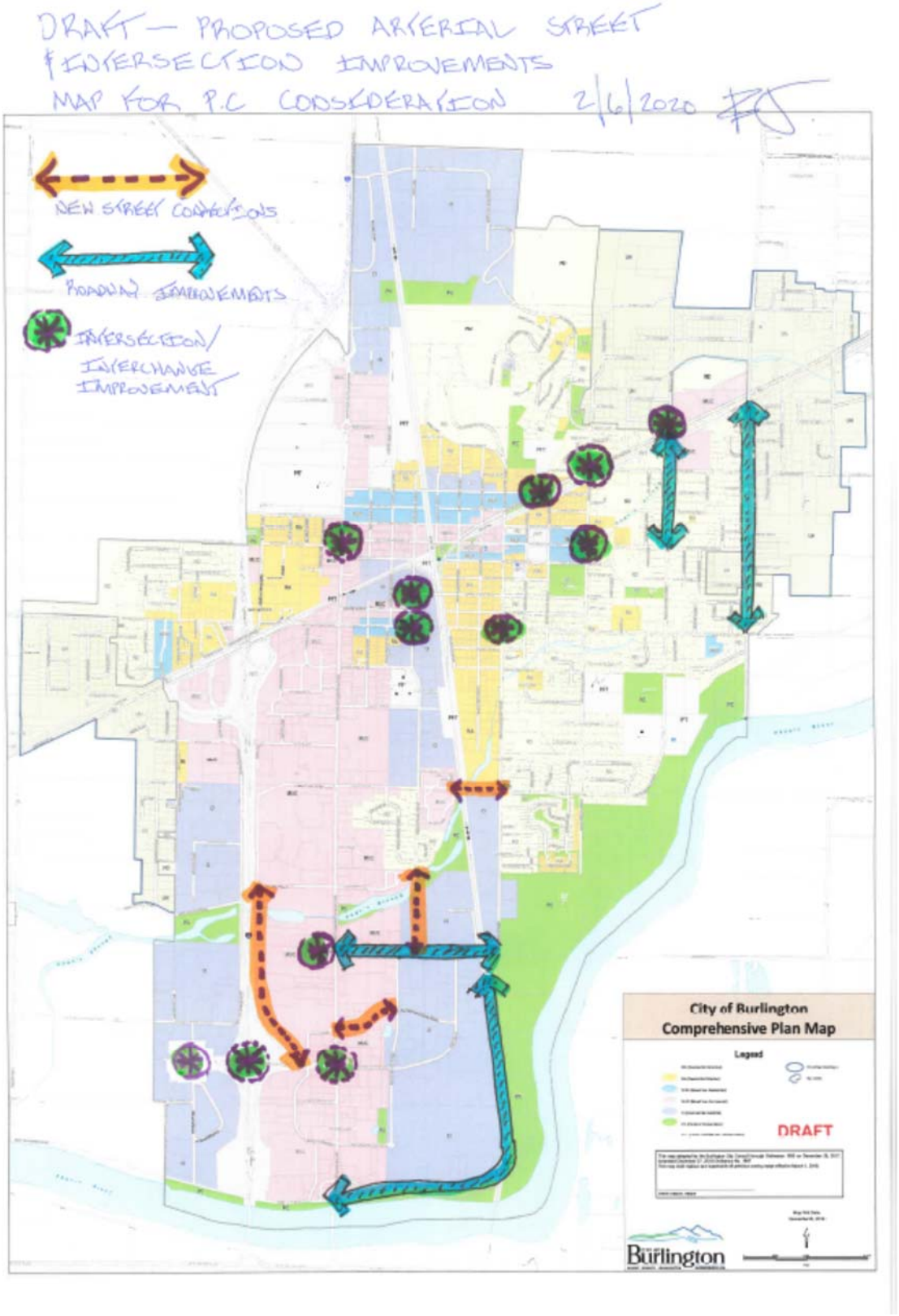
- **Community Improvements**: Includes changes to improve the safety, convenience, comfort, and attractiveness of the City's transportation infrastructure and foster economic activity. Quality of life improvements include things such as traffic calming measures, streetscape improvements, public parking, and enhanced signage. Projects in this category are not intended to address growth related impacts and are not eligible for impact fee funding.

Table 8.9 Planned Improvements – City Projects				
Map ID	**Project & Description**	**Category**	**Location**	**Cost/Impact Fee Eligible**
A-1	Widen East George Hopper – Add Sidewalks	Capacity	East of I-5 Overpass	$2,000,000 Yes
A-2	Signal Timing Improvements	Capacity	Intersection of George Hopper and Costco Drive	$669,000 Yes
A-3	Signal Timing Improvements	Capacity	Burlington Boulevard and Pease Road	$250,000 Yes
A-4	Construct Controlled Intersection	Capacity	South Spruce Street and Greenleaf	$1,750,000 Yes
B-1	Extend East McCorquedale Road	Supports Plan	Between Burlington Boulevard and Walnut Street	$3,200,000 Yes
B-2	Construct New Frontage Road	Supports Plan	Along I-5 Between George Hopper and Cascade Mall Drive	$4,500,000 Yes
B-3	New Multiuse Path	Supports Plan	Burlington Boulevard – Pease Road to Tammi Wilson Trail	$324,000 Yes
B-4	Reconstruct Pease Road to Urban Standards	Supports Plan	Burlington Boulevard to Anacortes Street	$1,500,000 Yes
B-5	Construct Grade Separated Rail Crossing and Street Extension	Supports Plan	Spruce Street to Anacortes Street	$15,000,000 Yes
B-6	Street Construction – North-South Connector	Supports Plan	Spruce Street to Pease Road	$15,000,000 Yes
B-7	New Multiuse Path –Rotary Park Connector	Supports Plan	Skagit to Section Street	$578,000 Yes
B-8	New Multiuse Path – Whitmarsh Road	Supports Plan	Whitmarsh Road – Skagit River to Pease Road	$538,000 Yes
B-9	Extend Multiuse Path – Tammi Wilson Trail	Supports Plan	Stevens Road – Goldenrod Road to City Limits	$585,0000 Yes
B-10	Extend Multiuse Path – Dike Trail	Supports Plan	Skagit River Dike – I-5 to Skagit River Park	$483,150 Yes
B-11	Extend Multiuse Path – Burlington High School Trail	Supports Plan	Chuckanut Transit Center to BESD Trail	$87,150 Yes
B-12	Bike Lane Network Buildout	Supports Plan	Citywide – Striping and Signage	$500,000 Yes
B-13	Local Street Improvements and Traffic Calming	Supports Plan	Citywide – Sidewalks and Intersection Improvements	$24,053,040 Yes
C-1	Intersection Improvement and Gateway	Community Improvement	Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue	$3,000,000 No
C-2	Reconstruct Gardner Road	Community Improvement	Rio Vista to SR-20	$1,800,000 No
C-3	Reconstruct Whitmarsh Road	Community Improvement	Burlington Boulevard to Pease Road	$2,000,000 No
			Total	***$77,817,364***

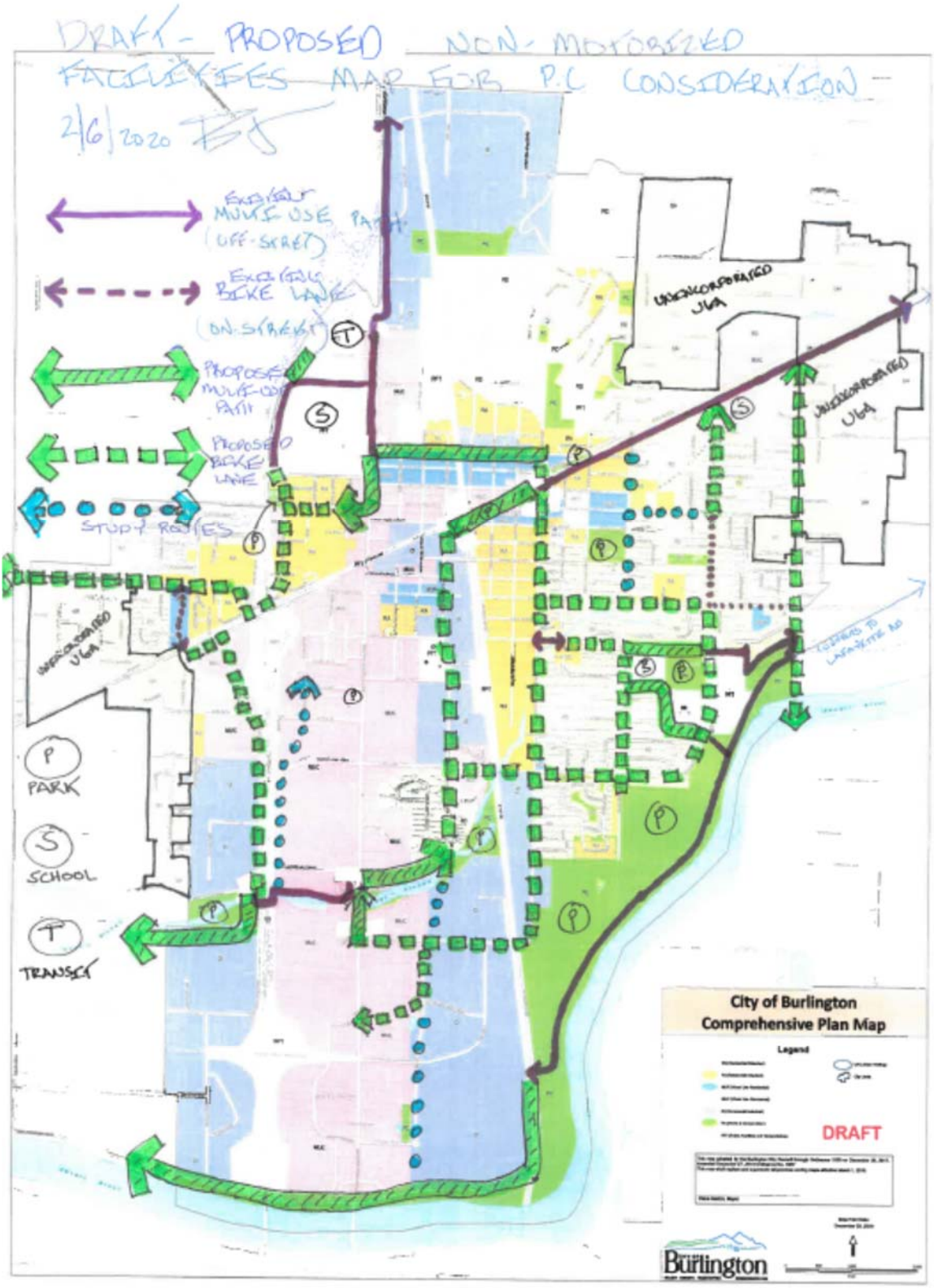
Table 8.10 Planned Improvements – City and WSDOT Partnership				
Map ID	**Project & Description**	**Category**	**Location**	**Cost/Impact Fee Eligible**
WS-A-1	Construct Controlled Intersection and Pedestrian Crossing	Capacity	SR-20 and Section Street	$1,750,000 Yes
WS-A-2	Construct Controlled Intersection and Pedestrian Crossing	Capacity	SR-20 and North Skagit Street	$1,750,000 Yes
WS-A-3	Construct Controlled Intersection and Pedestrian Crossing	Capacity	SR-20 and Anacortes Street/Cascade Highway	$1,750,000 Yes
WS-A-4	Reconstruct SR-20 to Urban Standards with Complete Streets Improvements	Capacity	SR-20 – Burlington Boulevard to City Limits	$6,930,000 Yes
WS-B-1	Extend Multiuse Path	Supports Plan	SR-20 – Skagit Street to Burlington Boulevard	$2,250,000 Yes
WS-C-1	Reconfigure Interchange	Community Improvement	George Hopper and I-5	$5,000,000 No
			Total	***$19,430,000***

The projects listed in table 8.10 are not necessary to address concurrency requirements within the City of Burlington (RCW 36.70A.070) but the City may choose to partner with WSDOT on these projects to the extent they advance the City's quality of life or connectivity goals. With respect to the SR-20 corridor projects it is the City of Burlington's position that SR-20 is not constructed to urban standards, does not include complete street improvements, and does not include adequate infrastructure for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles. The projects listed above are necessary to address these deficiencies and should be fully or partially funded by WSDOT.

Map 8.4 Proposed Arterial Street and Intersection Projects



Map 8.5 Proposed Non-Motorized Transportation Plan



Map 8.6 Proposed Enhanced Pedestrian Amenities

8.7 Goals and Policies

The following goals and policies are intended to ensure the City's future transportation needs are met and to ensure a high level of coordination between transportation planning and the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly land use. The bold headings below identify the City's transportation goals. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved.

8.7.1 Access and Resilience: Past development practices, particularly along Burlington Boulevard, have resulted in a disconnected street network, created isolated parcels with limited access, and reduced the number of potential routes. In order to facilitate infill and redevelopment, it will be necessary to build a finer grained and more robust street network. Over the next 20 years new corridors will be established parallel to Burlington Boulevard, an additional east-west railroad crossing will be constructed, and average block lengths will be reduced. The transportation needs of the City's residents and businesses will be met by providing additional flexibility and choices, without promoting any one mode to the detriment of another.

1. Improve the redundancy of the City's arterial street network and provide quicker access to areas that are cutoff by physical barriers by considering the following strategies:

    a. In addition to Burlington Boulevard, establish one or more continuous route north-south routes from Highway 20 to Whitmarsh Road;

    b. Establish a new grade separated crossing of the north-south BNSF right-of-way for the purpose of connecting South Spruce Street to South Anacortes Street.

    c. Pursue opportunities to work with BNSF and other agencies to create additional grade separated crossings, crossing improvements, and quite zones.

2. Establish and maintain a fully interconnected street system with a dense network of streets intersecting at regular, and frequent, intervals. Dead end streets, cul-de-sacs, looping roads, isolated development sites, and disconnected street patterns should be avoided and eliminated when possible. New developments should be fully connected to the City's street network and should be designed to facilitate the development of adjacent parcels and allow for the logical and orderly extension of streets, sidewalks, and paths with the overall objective of minimizing required travel distances.

3. Controlled intersections, with pedestrian crossings, should be provided at intervals of 600 feet, or less, along principal arterials.

4. Conduct a study to assess how well connected the City's street network is, identify potential improvements, and prioritize future investments.

5. Adopt sidewalk requirements that ensure sidewalks are free from obstructions and adequately sized based on traffic volumes and speeds, anticipated levels of use, and urban design considerations.

6. Work with rail operator and state and federal agencies to reduce wait times and blockages associated with train traffic, and consider grade separation and crossing improvements.

7. Ensure adequate provisions are made for freight and deliveries:

    a. Ensure new commercial and industrial developments incorporate design features to accommodate freight handling and deliveries and reduce conflicts between general traffic and trucks.

    b. Preserve or expand the current supply of industrially zoned land along rail lines to accommodate existing and future developments that rely on, or benefit from, rail access.

    c. Design standards and code requirements for land designated CI on the Comprehensive Plan Map should reflect the needs of freight access, commercial vehicles traffic, and industrial development.

8. Consider the needs of those who are dependent on cars for transportation, including families with young children, people with disabilities, and those who have difficulty getting around by providing conveniently located parking spaces at parks and public facilities, and by providing ADA accessible curb parking at regular intervals in the City's downtown.

9. Manage the City's publicly owned parking supply in downtown Burlington more efficiently by installing short term loading and drop off spaces at convenient intervals.

8.7.2 Consistency: Most of the City's future population and employment growth will be accommodated through infill and redevelopment and a large share of this growth will be concentrated along the Burlington Boulevard corridor. This pattern of development is intended to reduce travel distances and improve the convenience of walking and transit use by increasing the number of people living near stores, restaurants, and services. In order to support this pattern of development the City will ensure all transportation related plans and expenditures are consistent with the comprehensive plan.

1. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and shall be reviewed annually by the Planning Commission for internal consistency and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. The City's Comprehensive Plan, CIP, and TIP, and the Skagit Regional Transportation Plan shall be consistent with one another.

3. Consistent with RCW 36.70A.070.(6)(c) Skagit Transit (SKAT) should work with the Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) and Skagit Regional Transportation Planning Organization to ensure its Six-Year Transit Development Plans, capital expenditures, and service levels are consistent with the comprehensive plans adopted by the cities in Skagit County. SKAT should work with other agencies and jurisdictions in Skagit County to develop regionally coordinated level of services standards that support urban development in established urban growth areas.

4. Develop design specifications and cross section detail for different street classifications and segments. All subsequent public and private street improvements shall be consistent with the adopted standards and specifications.

5. Consistent with RCW 36.70A.103 and RCW 36.70A.070(6)(c) state agencies, including WSDOT, shall ensure their plans, capital expenditures, and actions are consistent with the Burlington Comprehensive Plan.

8.7.3 Demand Management: New road capacity and infrastructure is extremely expensive. Future transportation expenditures will be minimized reducing travel distances, making it possible to accomplish multiple tasks in one trip, and by shifting demand to less costly and more efficient modes. By 2036 the number of vehicle miles traveled, on a per capita basis, will be reduced by 30 percent, 14 percent of workers will commute by walking, bicycling, or riding transit, and 5 percent of the City's residents will work from home.

1. Improve convenience and reduce trip lengths by permitting and encouraging intensive mixed-use, residential, and commercial uses in the Commercial Core, Northern Gateway, and Downtown growth areas. Special consideration should be given to authorizing the construction of infill housing, such as townhomes, duplexes, and small lot development within walking distance of commercials areas.

2. Encourage more trips to be made on foot or by bicycle by taking the following actions:

    a. Provide sidewalks along both sides of streets and install pedestrian crossings at regular intervals;

    b. Ensure new development includes direct and convenient pedestrian connections;

c. Enhanced pedestrian amenities, such as wider sidewalks, landscaping, and additional lighting, should be provided in the City's most important commercial corridors where high volumes of pedestrian traffic are expected or encouraged;

d. Develop and implement a wayfinding and signage program that identifies the location of multi-use paths, bicycle lanes, public facilities, parks, schools, and transit routes.

e. Provide bicycle racks or storage facilities at public facilities such as schools, municipal offices, and parks. Bicycle racks and storage facilities shall also be required for large commercial and residential developments.

3. Work with Skagit Transit to improve service along the Burlington Boulevard corridor, establish minimum levels of transit service based on vehicle headways, and implement passenger counts based on jurisdiction and route segments. Transit service along high performing urban routes should be prioritized over low performing rural routes.

4. Provide for the safe movement of pedestrians and bicycles along the SR-20 corridor.

8.7.4 Health and Safety: A large number of people are injured or killed in transportation related accidents each year and lack of physical activity is a significant contributor to heart disease, obesity, diabetes and other conditions. Changes to the transportation system can reduce the probability of serious accidents and improve public health. By 2036 the number of people who engage in physically active transportation, such as walking or bicycling, will be increased, a larger percentage of the City's population will live within walking distance of a school or park, and the number of serious accidents will be reduced.

1. Establish a network of multi-use paths and bicycle lanes that connect to parks, schools, and public attractions.

2. Provided enhanced pedestrian amenities along the Burlington Boulevard and Fairhaven Avenue, such as wider sidewalks, pedestrian oriented signage and lighting, landscaped buffers, crosswalks improvements, and curb bulb-outs.

3. Establish and implement a wayfinding and signage system that identifies safe routes walking and cycling routes to school and work with the Burlington Edison School district to make this information available to students and school district employees.

4. Reduce speeding and unsafe driving through enforcement and traffic calming measures such as curb bulb-outs, narrower travel lanes, on-street parking, neighborhood traffic circles, and the construction of a dense fully connected street-network.

5. Continually monitor and evaluate emergency response times and incorporate accident information provided by the City's police and fire departments into future transportation plans.

6. Coordinate with WSDOT to enhance the safety of the SR-20 corridor including, but not limited to the construction of, controlled intersections, pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, traffic calming measures, streetscape improvements, and multiuse paths.

8.7.5 Financial Sustainability:

1. When evaluating major land use changes, such as urban growth area expansions and annexations, the short and long term financial implications of transportation needs shall be considered. Preference shall be given to land use options that reduce the need for expensive transportation infrastructure by reducing trip lengths or shifting demand to less expensive modes.

2. Transportation expenditures should generally be prioritized in the following order:

    a. Maintenance and repair;

    b. Safety improvements, including the provision of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, streetscape improvements, and neighborhood traffic calming measures;

    c. New connections within the City's existing municipal boundaries that improve access to underserved areas;

    d. Expansions of existing facilities to provide additional capacity within the City's existing municipal boundaries;

    e. Improvements necessitated by the annexation of land in the City's urban growth area.

    f. Improvements necessitated by an expansion of the City's urban growth area.

3. Establish a transportation benefits district to stabilize transportation revenues and provide a dedicated funding source for transportation improvements.

4. Impact fee tiers, or zones, should be established to reflect the disproportionate transportation impacts of development in outlying areas and to recognize the demand management benefits of directing growth to central areas, such as the Commercial Core, Northern Gateway, and Downtown growth areas.

5. Consider partnering with Skagit County to establish a program to collect impact fees in unincorporated Skagit County for the purposes of mitigating the impacts of unincorporated development on City transportation infrastructure.

8.8 Funding

Through the year 2036 the City estimates that $69,247,364 will be available to fund transportation improvements. At the same time, the total cost of the transportation projects identified in this plan is estimated to be $97,247,364, resulting in a funding gap of approximately $28,216,009. In order to address the gap the City should explore potential cost savings or new revenue sources.

A large portion of the projected transportation costs ($19.43 million) are associated with the SR-20 corridor. The SR-20 corridor is managed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). Provided WSDOT assumes responsibility for these costs the total gap between revenues and expenditures will be narrowed to $8,734,792. Additional revenue could be generated by revising the City's impact fees schedule and creating a Transportation Benefits District (TBD). A detailed analysis of project costs and potential funding sources is provided in the Capital Facilities Element and Volume II.

9 Implementation

9.1 Introduction

The Implementation Element describes how the Comprehensive Plan will be used, updated, and amended. It explains how the public will be involved in making important planning decisions and identifies the procedures used to review and issue permits. The Implementation Element also explains how the property rights of individuals and businesses will be protected and balanced with the needs of the broader community.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be used. While planning is required by law, it is also a good idea. The City is committed to using the planning process to make smart decisions, avoid costly mistakes, and consider the long term implications of its decisions.

The Implementation Element is guided by the following broad objectives:

- **Long Term Vision and Consistency.** Decisions regarding permits and changes to the Comprehensive Plan will be made using consistent procedures and interpretations, and the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations will only be changed after carefully evaluating the long term benefits and costs.

- **Public Participation.** The public will be involved in important planning decisions and will be provided with an opportunity to ensure that permit decisions are made in accordance with adopted policies and regulations. Public participation measures will be structured to ensure broad community representation and to prevent small groups or narrow interests from dominating the planning process.

- **Fairness and Property Rights.** The Comprehensive Plan is intended to balance the interests of individuals with the interests of the community. Permit applicants will be treated equally and decisions will be made solely on the basis of applicable laws and regulations.

- **Effectiveness.** All major decisions regarding City actions or capital spending will be evaluated for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Procedures will be used to ensure the plan is used for its intended purposes. The City will periodically assess is progress towards achieving the goals of the comprehensive plan and make amendments when necessary.

9.2 Requirements

9.2.1 General Requirements

The Growth Management Act (GMA) fundamentally changed the land use planning process in the State of Washington. In addition to requiring that local governments prepare comprehensive plans, the GMA also established important public participation requirements, mandated consistency between the plans of neighboring jurisdictions, and firmly established the principle that zoning and development regulations must be consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan. In addition, other laws adopted in conjunction with the GMA reformed the way land use permits are reviewed and issued.

Washington's land use laws have four categories of requirements that related directly to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan including:

- Public Participation
- Consistency
- Permit Processing and Comprehensive Plan Amendments
- Property Rights

9.2.2 Public Participation

The GMA defines the "public" very broadly. For the purpose of this plan the public includes individuals, interest groups, trade organizations, government agencies, tribes, utilities, and businesses. Public participation is required by law but is also essential for effective planning, it can reduce mistrust in government, educate and empower residents, and builds support for, and ownership of, the City's decisions.

One of the goals of the GMA is to involve people in the planning process. To that end, local governments must adopt a program to that ensures "early and continuous" public participation in the development and implementation of comprehensive plans. Local governments are also required to establish a process whereby citizens, business owners, and other interested parties can suggest changes to plans and regulations.

9.2.3 Consistency

By law, all parts of the comprehensive plan must be consistent with one another, and all of the City's actions must be consistent with the plan. This means for example, that the City cannot use one population projection in the Transportation Element and a different projection in the Land Use Element. It also means that all City actions, including capital spending decisions, must be reviewed for consistency with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the City's development regulations must be consistent with, and implement the plan. Finally, the

City must ensure the comprehensive plan is consistent with the Skagit County Countywide Planning Policies.

9.2.4 Permit Processing and Plan Amendments

The City is required to provide a process that allows citizens, business owners, and other interested parties with an opportunity to suggest changes to the Comprehensive Plan. The comprehensive plan may only be amended once each year and all of the proposed amendments must be considered together in a consolidated fashion so the cumulative impacts of amendments can be analyzed to ensure the Comprehensive Plan is internally consistent.

To comply with these requirements the City must have a process for compiling, and considering, suggested changes to the Comprehensive Plan. This does not mean however, that the City is required to act on every suggested change. The City may defer suggested changes to another calendar year or decline to move forward altogether. If the City finds a suggested change warrants further action it should be placed on a list, known as a docket, for consideration with other proposed amendments.

In order to implement the Comprehensive Plan, the GMA requires that the City have a permit processing system that ensures applications are processed in a timely and fair manner and that codes and regulations are applied consistently. Importantly, the permit review process may not be used a “planning process”. Fundamental policy decisions made during the adoption of the comprehensive plan or development regulations may not be revisited when reviewing permits. The City should provide a prompt, coordinated permit review process that ensures accountability to both applicants and the public. Finally, the City must have procedures in place to monitor and enforce development regulations, permit requirements, and conditions of approval.

9.2.5 Property Rights

Once of the goals of the GMA states that that property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation and that the rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions. This is not intended to expand or reduce the scope of property rights, but rather to ensure the City considers the existing protections afforded by the state and federal Constitutions. The Washington State Attorney General has published a guidance document to help local governments avoid unconstitutional takings and the City is required to use the document to guide all administrative and regulatory actions involving property.

9.3 Goals and Policies

The goals and policies of this section are intended to inform guide how the Comprehensive Plan will be used, updated, and amended. They are also intended to explain how the public will be involved in planning decisions. Each goal is followed by a list of policies. The goals describe *what* the City is trying to achieve, while the policies describe *how* the goals will be achieved. All decisions made by the City of Burlington, and by other government agencies, shall be consistent with these goals and policies.

9.3.1 Long Term Vision: By thinking long term the City can effectively prioritize its actions, avoid costly mistakes, and anticipate problems before they develop. Amendments to the comprehensive plan will only be made after careful consideration of long term costs, benefits, and risks. Long term, community-wide interests will be favored over narrow short term benefits.

1. When considering potential changes to the Comprehensive Plan long term costs, benefits, and risks should be carefully evaluated. Factors that should be considered when evaluating Comprehensive Plan amendments include, but are not limited to:

    a. Long term impacts on the City's budget and fiscal condition;

    b. Changes to the natural environment;

    c. Housing supply;

    d. Employment and economic development;

2. Comprehensive plan amendments that lead to changes or impacts that are irreversible, or difficult to reverse, should be subjected to the highest level of scrutiny. Generally slow, measured, incremental changes should be favored over dramatic changes.

3. Whenever possible the City should pursue innovative policy approaches that are forward looking and based on the best knowledge and information available.

9.3.2 Consistency: The effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan depends on consistency. Comprehensive plans with conflicting provisions are difficult to interpret and implement. Inconsistencies in the plans of neighboring jurisdictions make cooperation and coordination difficult and increase the likelihood of disputes. Inconsistent application and interpretation of comprehensive plan provisions and development regulations erodes public trust in the City and reduces the credibility of the comprehensive planning process. The City's Comprehensive Plan will be internally consistent, consistent with Countywide Planning Policies, and the plans of neighboring jurisdictions.

1. The Comprehensive Plan shall be an internally consistent document and all components of the Comprehensive Plan shall function in an interrelated and self-reinforcing fashion. No component or provision of the Comprehensive Plan may render another component or provision ineffective or inoperable.

2. Implementation measures, including but not limited to, development regulations and capital spending programs, and functional or implementation plans such as the City's Sewer Comprehensive Plan, Surface Water Management Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), shall be consistent with, and implement, the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Provide opportunities for all City departments to review proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.

4. Proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan shall be provided to neighboring jurisdictions, State agencies, and the Skagit County Council of Governments to help ensure interjurisdictional consistency.

5. Support cooperation and coordination between municipalities, Skagit County, and special service districts particularly with respect to:

    a. Population, housing, and employment allocations;

    b. Uniform analytical models for tracking and reporting land consumption and development activity;

    c. Methods of modeling and reporting the impacts of local decisions or actions on regionally significant environmental functions such as flooding, water quality, habitat loss, and water supply;

    d. Ensuring the plans and actions of neighboring jurisdictions are consistent with one another;

    e. The provision of social services, subsidized housing, and emergency services;

6. State agencies, regional planning organizations, and special purpose districts shall comply with the City's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations.

9.3.3 Public Participation: Public participation is essential to formulating and realizing long term priorities. If managed effectively, public participation can give a voice to those who might not otherwise participate, build public trust in government, and create a sense of ownership over public decisions. It also allows citizens to hold their government accountable and ensure permit decisions are consistent with adopted regulations and policies. However, if managed

ineffectively, public participation can allow a few powerful voices to dominate the decision making process. All members of the public, particularly those who are traditionally least inclined to participate, will feel they are able to effectively engage with their local government and will perceive the public involvement process as fair and respectful.

1. Opportunities for public participation and citizen oversight shall be incorporated into all decisions involving the Comprehensive Plan and associated implementation measures.

2. Public participation measures should be tailored to the characteristics of the decision being made and the public should have a clear understanding of how their input will used to inform the decisions making process.

3. For major planning decisions public participation measures should involve a broad, and representative, segment of the population and efforts should be made to reach out to those who might be apprehensive about participating.

4. Provide clear and easy to navigate procedures for appealing permit decisions.

5. Information regarding long range planning, public hearings, public participation opportunities, and major permit decisions should be posted on the City's website.

6. Every effort should be made to produce planning related materials using plain, easily understood language, free of technical jargon. When possible handouts, public notices, and other similar communications should be made available in English and Spanish.

9.3.4 Fair and Expedient Permit Decisions: To the maximum extent possible development regulations will be drafted in a clear and unambiguous fashion and permit decisions will be made solely on the basis of adopted laws, regulations, and policies. The public will have a clear understanding of when, and under what conditions, permit decisions will be made.

1. All permit decisions shall be based exclusively on adopted policies and regulations.

2. Avoid unnecessary or redundant permit review procedures.

3. Improve permit processing times and the clarity and consistency of permit decisions.

4. Land use decisions and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations shall not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property. In accordance with GMA requirements, the City shall use the Washington State Attorney General's advisory memorandum on avoiding unconstitutional takings to guide its decisions.

5. Variances shall not be used as substitute for, or as a method to circumvent, the legislative process. Variances should only be granted to provide relief from a unique and site specific

hardship, or to prevent an unconstitutional taking of private property. Under no circumstances shall a variance process be used to change allowable uses, residential densities, or lot sizes requirements.

9.3.5 Effectiveness and Periodic Evaluations: The Comprehensive Plan is a long range document and should be administered consistently. This does not however, mean it should never be changed. The future is difficult to predict and community priorities evolve over time. The City will monitor the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations and make periodic adjustments as necessary to ensure the goals of the Comprehensive Plan are achieved.

1. An annual report, summarizing development activity, Comprehensive Plan amendments, significant permit decisions, and the City's progress towards achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan should be produced by the Planning Department and distributed to the Planning Commission, Elected Officials, neighboring jurisdictions, The Skagit Council of Governments, and members of the public. The report should be drafted using consistent metrics so change can be easily monitored over time.

2. Prior to each GMA mandated periodic update cycle the Planning Department shall prepare a detailed report on land consumption, housing production, development activity, and the City's progress towards achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. This report should be used to identify potential changes to the Comprehensive Plan and establish a scope of work for the period update.

3. At the end of each year the Planning Department and Planning Commission shall work together to establish a work plan for the following year. The work plan should identify specific tasks and projects to be completed during the course of the year and should be consistent with available resources. The work plan should be developed based on the following order of priorities:

    a. Public health, safety, or environmental concerns of an immediate nature;

    b. Efforts to achieve or maintain legal or regulatory compliance;

    c. Changes necessary to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan;

    d. All other work, including proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan

4. A process shall be provided to allow the public to suggest changes to the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. The following schedule should be used to guide this process.

a. Requests to amend the comprehensive plan and development regulations should be accepted between January 1st and June 1st of each year for possible action the following year.

b. The Community Development Department should compile requests and produce a draft work plan and docket proposal for the Planning Commission's consideration. The draft work plan and docket proposal should be submitted to the Planning Commission no later than August 1st.

c. The Planning Commission should make a recommendation on the draft docket and work plan prior to October 1st

d. The City Council shall take action no later than December 31st to establish the docket and work plan for the following year.

5. Requests to amend the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations should not be accepted while the City is working to complete a GMA mandated periodic update.