

RESOLUTION NO. 2008-09

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AND ENHANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
BELLINGHAM'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INFILL STRATEGY**

WHEREAS, in 2004, the City recommended and Whatcom County adopted population growth forecasts for Bellingham that required the City to plan for urban area population growth of 31,600 during the 2002-2022 planning period; and

WHEREAS, the City adopted an update to the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan in 2006 that established as a matter of policy that the City would accommodate the forecasted growth through a combination of possible methods, including the infill of housing within the existing City limits; and

WHEREAS, infill in existing urban areas includes, but is not limited to, the master planning and development of Urban Centers through incentives and regulatory structures, and the modification of development codes to allow for additional housing types in appropriate parts of existing developed neighborhoods and

WHEREAS, infill that increases density within the City limits provides multiple advantages to the City and its residents including reduced transportation impacts and costs, lowered infrastructure costs, greater opportunities for affordable housing, enhanced community and social networks, locally-owned and/or small business opportunities, and protected rural and agricultural character of the unincorporated areas of the County; and

WHEREAS, the Old Town Urban Center master plan, supported by the Lettered Streets Neighborhood, has been approved by the City Council and is designed to provide more housing than anticipated under the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Samish Way Urban Center, proactively supported by the Sehome Neighborhood, was initiated for master planning and has not been considered by the Comprehensive Plan for the additional housing it might provide; and

WHEREAS, many of the remaining 20 designated Urban Centers, including waterfront redevelopment, have yet to be planned or could be planned to provide housing in excess of the Comprehensive Plan estimates; and

WHEREAS, yet-to-be-written development code changes would allow for a mix of housing types to encourage infill in appropriate areas of existing neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City considers active participation by neighborhoods to preserve neighborhood character through review and discussion of design standards and overall neighborhood impact associated with an infill program to be an essential element of the City's growth management program success; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor of Bellingham has appointed nine community representatives to a Code and Character Taskforce to design a second Planning Academy in Spring 2008 focused on working with the community to create a toolkit of infill strategies to add to Bellingham's development code; and

WHEREAS, the City believes the creation of socially-created economic value as a result of upzoning or other density bonus programs should be fairly shared with the affected neighborhoods and with the community at large; and

WHEREAS, it is in the City's best interests to explore, prioritize, and implement strategies listed as examples and policies in the Comprehensive Plan to further the City's infill program; and

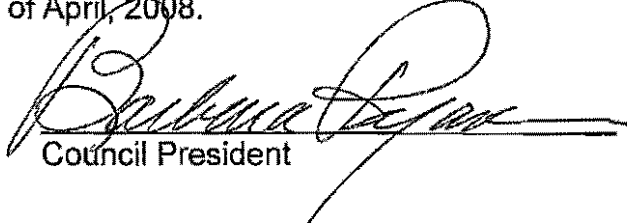
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM:

1. It is the policy and directive of the City to continue to develop and implement long-term plans to pursue infill and growth strategies to meet the City's growth projections in the 2006 adopted Comprehensive Plan in the following steps all acting concurrently:
 - a. Make more efficient use of the remaining developable and re-developable land in the City.
 - b. Master Plan all designated Urban Centers and encourage and facilitate Urban Center development.
 - c. Provide necessary resources to evaluate and modify zoning and development codes to facilitate infill and increase density in appropriate parts of existing neighborhoods. In addition to creating the means to increase density, the city will establish design standards and other incentives to preserve and enhance neighborhood character as infill occurs.

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- d. Proactively analyze and support phasing of annexation petitions of undeveloped UGA land based on available resources to provide infrastructure and services.
 - e. Develop and implement incentives, strategies and requirements to achieve a healthy mix of housing sizes, types, and prices.
2. All growth strategies and implementation shall recognize the importance of the process of neighborhood participation and substantial efforts shall be incorporated in performance of this policy directive to include such neighborhood participation.


PASSED by the Council this 14th day of April, 2008.


Council President

APPROVED by me this 18th day of April, 2008.


Mayor

ATTEST: 
Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Office of the City Attorney