

# YORK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PROPOSED AMENDMENTS 10-1-08

**To vote:** All York residents – property owners and renters – and business owners are eligible to vote on the Neighborhood Plan Amendments. To submit a ballot either (a) attend the Oct. 8, 2008, 7pm, general membership meeting to vote (meeting is at Garden St. Methodist Church, 1326 N. Garden St.); or (b) submit a ballot via online voting; go to [www.yorkneighborhood.org](http://www.yorkneighborhood.org) to access the ballot; or (c) request a ballot be mailed to you; call 360-739-0542.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO CITY OF BELLINGHAM DECEMBER 1, 2008

This Proposed Amendment document has 3 parts: Land Use, Neighborhood Design, and Transportation.

### I. LAND USE PROPOSALS

The York Neighborhood Association proposes several Land Use changes that would offer infill opportunities, protection of single-family zoned sections of the neighborhood, preserve the historic character of the neighborhood, and provide new open space/park land which is much needed in this densely populated neighborhood with very little current park space.

#### Land Use & Zoning Objectives (LUZOs):

**SUB-AREA 1:** Current land use designation – INDUSTRIAL, LIGHT

**LUZO-1:** The area currently occupied by the Bellingham School District will be limited to the school district bus operations until such time as a change in ownership occurs. Future redevelopment should focus on public land use. This dedication of land along the creek would provide for a Whatcom Creek Trail Greenway park and riparian habitat. If the full acquisition by the City is not feasible due to cost, the development should focus on a joint provision for an equal distribution of public and multi-family residential land use. The included housing would reflect the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood.

**A rezone of the western section of Sub-Area 1 is proposed to change it to PUBLIC land use with the goal to convert the Public land into a City park.**

**WHERE:** This area is defined by Whatcom Creek on the north and west, Meador Avenue on the south, and James Street on the east. Currently this section of Sub-area 1 includes the Bellingham School District bus barn.

**WHY:** Ideally located along the future extension of the Whatcom Creek Trail Greenway corridor and at a mid-point between amenities at the Maritime Heritage Park and Whatcom Falls Park, the area offers the opportunity of a natural, open space with amenities. With much added infill anticipated in the York, Sunnyland, Sehome and the CBD neighborhoods, this addition would add the necessary supporting open space, and

the linkage needed for the transition to non-motorized traffic Waterways leading to the bay should not continue to be zoned industrial.

---

**SUB-AREA 2:** Current land use designation – COMMERCIAL, CENTRAL

**LUZO-2: Special Regulations: No more than 40% of any one property shall be taken up by open surface parking.**

**WHERE:** This area is defined by State St. on the west, the alley between Forest and N. Garden streets on the east, E. Holly St. on the south and Whatcom Creek on the north.

**WHY:** The revised Special Regulations offer the opportunity for urban infill using historic buildings as well as new construction on properties that could be redeveloped for housing as well as commercial use.

---

**Amendment to the York Neighborhood Plan, Part V, Subarea Descriptions and Land Use Designations, (text) Paragraph 2 (insertion).**

**LUZO-3: York residents value highly the preservation of the neighborhood's character. To this end, the neighborhood will promote historic designation of Sub-Areas 4, 5 and 9. Many portions of these sub-areas are well intact historic housing stock and historic commercial buildings. It is desirable to consolidate each sub-area into its own historic district.**

Area 4 -- **WHERE:** This area is bounded by the east alley of Forest St. on the west, Ellis St. on the east, E. Champion St. on the north, and Magnolia St. on the south.

**WHY:** 46 of the 58 structures in this area are historic homes built prior to 1925. The area includes the Magnolia Court Apartments built in 1908, the Garden Street United Methodist Church built in 1912, and the former Bellingham Bay Lutheran Church built in 1903, now used as multi-residential/business. Historic designation has the potential of encouraging the creation of live-work units with a mix of upper level residential and ground floor commercial including office uses to preserve historic structures. An incentive to preserve historic housing, such as establishing an arts district or other commercial theme, would rehabilitate the salt and pepper effect the current zoning has created. New construction and renovations should undergo architectural design review and neighborhood input for consistency and historical fidelity.

Area 5 – **WHERE:** South of Lakeway Drive surrounding Franklin Park; and Sub-Area 5, north of Lakeway Drive

Sub-Area 9 – **WHERE:** The east side of Ellis Street from Edwards on the south to York Street on the north.

---

**SUB-AREA 7:** Current land use designation –PUBLIC (FRANKLIN PARK)

**LUZO-4: Identify and include the accessible, open spaces surrounding Franklin Park that are currently classified as unimproved street rights-of-way in the 1200 block of Franklin Street.**

**WHERE:** The unimproved street rights-of-way that form a street island north of Franklin Park and the hillside to the west above Franklin Park.

**WHY:** Protect this area as accessible open space into perpetuity. This area has been almost fully restored to natural vegetation, and opened to public use through a trail system, benches and signage. Thousands of volunteer hours have contributed to make these rights-of-way accessible open spaces in a built-in neighborhood where no accessible open space exists.

---

**SUB-AREA 9:** Current land use designation – RESIDENTIAL MULTI, high density with 1,000 sq. ft. per unit.

**LUZO-6:** **A rezone to density of 3,000 sq. ft. per unit is proposed; Eliminate Special Conditions except: Buffer between Area 5; Special Regulations should be amended to state office uses are limited to conversion of existing housing stock, with reduced parking required per unit to preserve the historic housing stock.**

**WHERE:** This area is Ellis St. from the corner of Edwards Street, on the south, to Gladstone St. on the north, plus two lots north of Gladstone.

**WHY:** Built on small lots, this Ellis Street area is accessed by and has parking located in the alley that abuts the single-family zoned Area 5 on the east. This area contains many historic homes built prior to 1900, with 10 built in the 1890s. Ellis St. runs through a section of the neighborhood that on either side – east or west – are potential historic districts. Ellis Street homes should be recognized as an asset to the City’s historic housing stock and should be protected from demolition for infill purposes. Rezoning the density to 3,000 sq. ft. is consistent with other sections of the neighborhood in which historic homes prevail and a rezone would help support preservation of the historic housing stock in Area 9.

## **II. NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN PROPOSALS**

The York Neighborhood Association proposes the following amendments to the York Neighborhood Plan, Chapter 7, Neighborhood Design:

### **York Design Objectives (YDOs)**

**YDO-1** Make application for one or more Historic Districts in York Neighborhood. Designated areas are: (1) Sub-Area 5, south of Lakeway Drive surrounding Franklin Park; (2) Sub-Area 5, north of Lakeway Drive; and (3) Sub-Area 4, west of Ellis St. and including east and west sides of Ellis St.

---

**YDO-2.** Enforce and expand current regulatory codes to prevent degradation of existing historic housing stock and remove incentives to neglect such properties.

---

**YDO-3** Create a Neighborhood Design Standards document, with open participation of any and all York residents, property and business stakeholders to ensure that new development is in scale with and architecturally compatible with the historic character of York; and that the neighborhood’s original character of single-family homes is preserved.

The document would be publicized through all outreach methods available to York Neighborhood Association and articulate a consensus character of York Neighborhood. The final document would be reviewed and approved by the neighborhood at large.

---

**YDO-4** Add the supporting open space, parks and recreational opportunities needed, and pedestrian/bicycle routes along greened, safe streets and trails, to support the present and anticipated population.

---

**YDO-5** The York Neighborhood recommends the use of environmentally sensitive planning and construction for multi-unit construction and remodeling.

### **III. TRANSPORTATION PROPOSALS**

The York Neighborhood Association proposes the following amendments to the neighborhood plan related to Chapter 3, Transportation:

#### **York Traffic Implementations (YTIs)**

**YTI-1** Install pedestrian crosswalks at the following locations:

- 1) Lakeway Drive, between Franklin and Grant streets
- 2) Samish Way, at Maple St.

**YTI-2** Improve the pedestrian crosswalk for visibility & safety at Gladstone & Ellis streets.

---

**YTI-3** Install traffic calming devices (traffic circles, bump outs or ins, speed bumps etc.) to slow traffic on the following neighborhood streets:

- 1300, 1400, 1500 blocks of Humboldt
- 1300, 1400, 1500 blocks of Grant
- 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500 blocks of Franklin
- 300 & 400 blocks of Whatcom Street

**YTI-4** Install sidewalks and curbs on blocks where there are none to facilitate pedestrian safety.

**YTI-5** Consideration to be given for Residential Parking Zones (RPZs)

**YTI-6** Create identified, safe pedestrian and bicycle causeways, running north to south and east to west, to link the neighborhood internally and externally to destinations and encourage non-motorized transport.

**YTI-7** Safety, visibility improvements need for the (1) sidewalk/underpass of I-5 at Lakeway Dr.; (2) Ellis, Lakeway, Holly intersection; (3) alleys throughout neighborhood.