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Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan

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BELLINGHAM CENTRAL WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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Final Report

City of Bellingham
Planning and Economic Development Department

June 1986

"The preparation of this report was financially aided through a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology with funds obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and appropriated for Section 306b of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972."

Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

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Economics
Planning
Landscape Architecture

June 30, 1986

William T. Geyer, Director
City of Bellingham
Planning and Economic Development Department
City Hall, 210 Lottie Street
Bellingham, Washington 98225

Dear Bill:

We are pleased to transmit the Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan. The Plan will guide improvement with a unique twist of practicality and imagination. It embodies economic development, environmental values, urban design quality, waterfront access and resource protection and should stimulate continuing public/private cooperation.

We sincerely appreciate the help and guidance provided by all who participated in the process. The Task Force, Technical Committee, concerned citizens and Rick Fackler, the City's project manager all deserve special credit. Our team is proud to have contributed to Bellingham's future and we look forward to sharing your successes.

Sincerely,

Vincent Vergel de Dios, AICP
Director of Planning

PREFACE

The Mayor of Bellingham and the City Council publicly affirmed the need for ideas and practical solutions for Bellingham's waterfront. Protection of existing economic and environmental assets and affirmation of new development were both viewed as necessary. With the assistance of a Coastal Zone Management Grant from the Department of Ecology, the City took another step toward revitalization by focusing attention upon the Central Waterfront. This urbanized area between Squalicum Harbor and the downtown includes heavy industrial uses (dominated by Georgia-Pacific) and a mix of light industrial, retail, commercial, residential and public uses clearly in a state of transition.

The results of an intensive four-month participatory process are documented in this Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan. The Development Plan will provide direction and order to physical change in the future. It is intended as a flexible framework to guide development consistent with a conceptual idea. It also outlines specific, realistic projects that can set the trend and pace of improvement.

This report is organized to highlight the Development Plan. Background on its derivation and related details are also included. Technical progress was reported during the process and is included in separate reports noted in the Appendix.

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Introduction/Summary

INTRODUCTION

Since its early beginnings the Central Waterfront of Bellingham has been a challenge to man's ingenuity. The water's historical ties to industry and to the community are still reflected in today's mix of activities. Faced with conflicting interests and need for economic improvement, the City of Bellingham took action to stimulate desired change and protect existing values via the study effort underlying this document. A balance of practicality and imagination was called for in the planning. The results are described in this document, the Central Waterfront Development Plan for Bellingham. Both direction and steps toward achieving the future visions are offered.

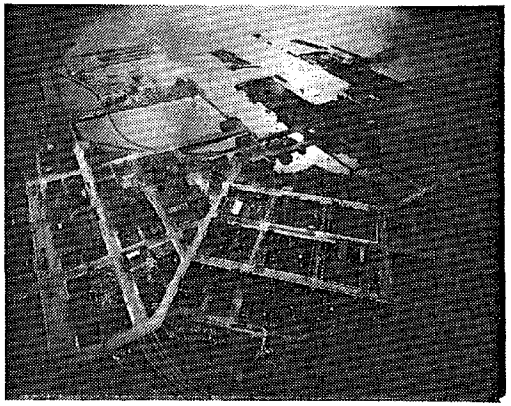


Photo Courtesy of Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, WA

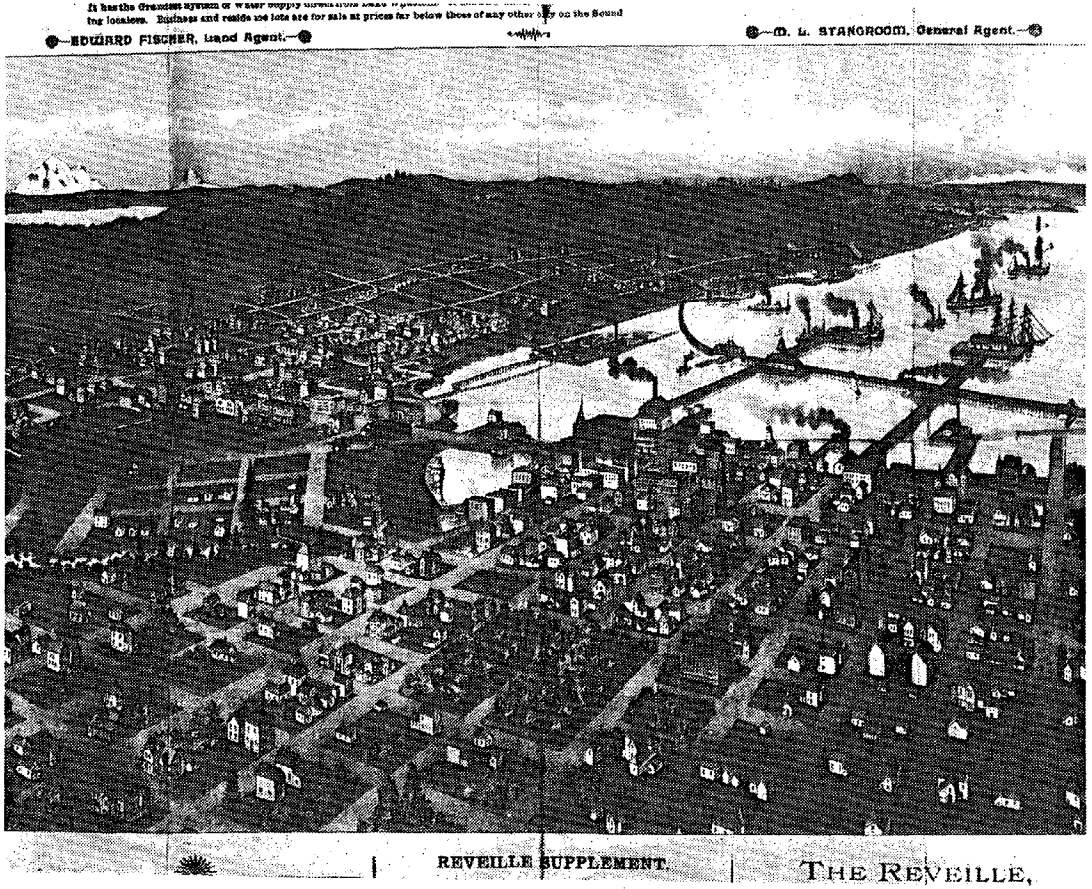


Photo Courtesy of Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Bellingham, WA

Figure 1
Historic Bellingham

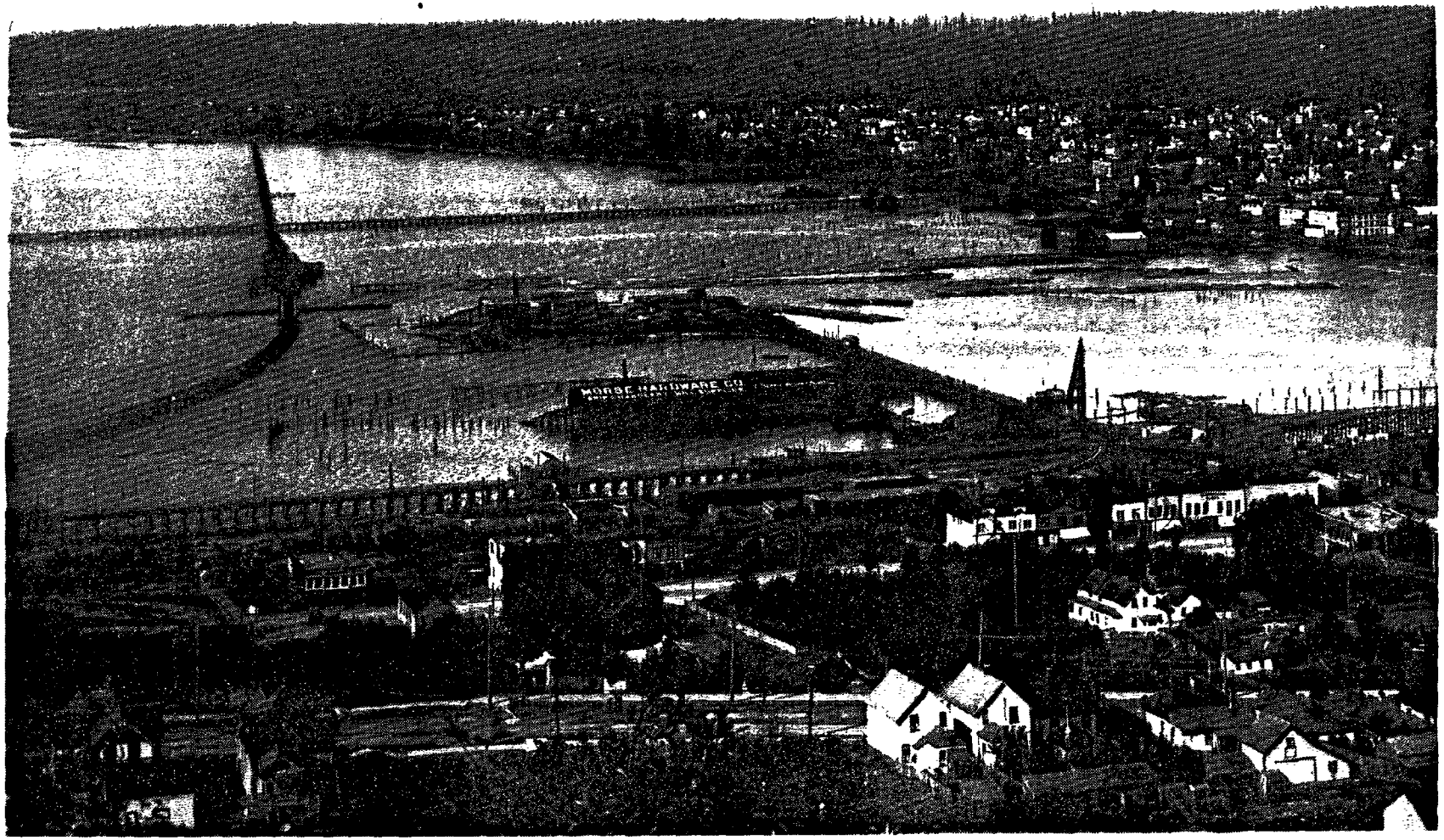
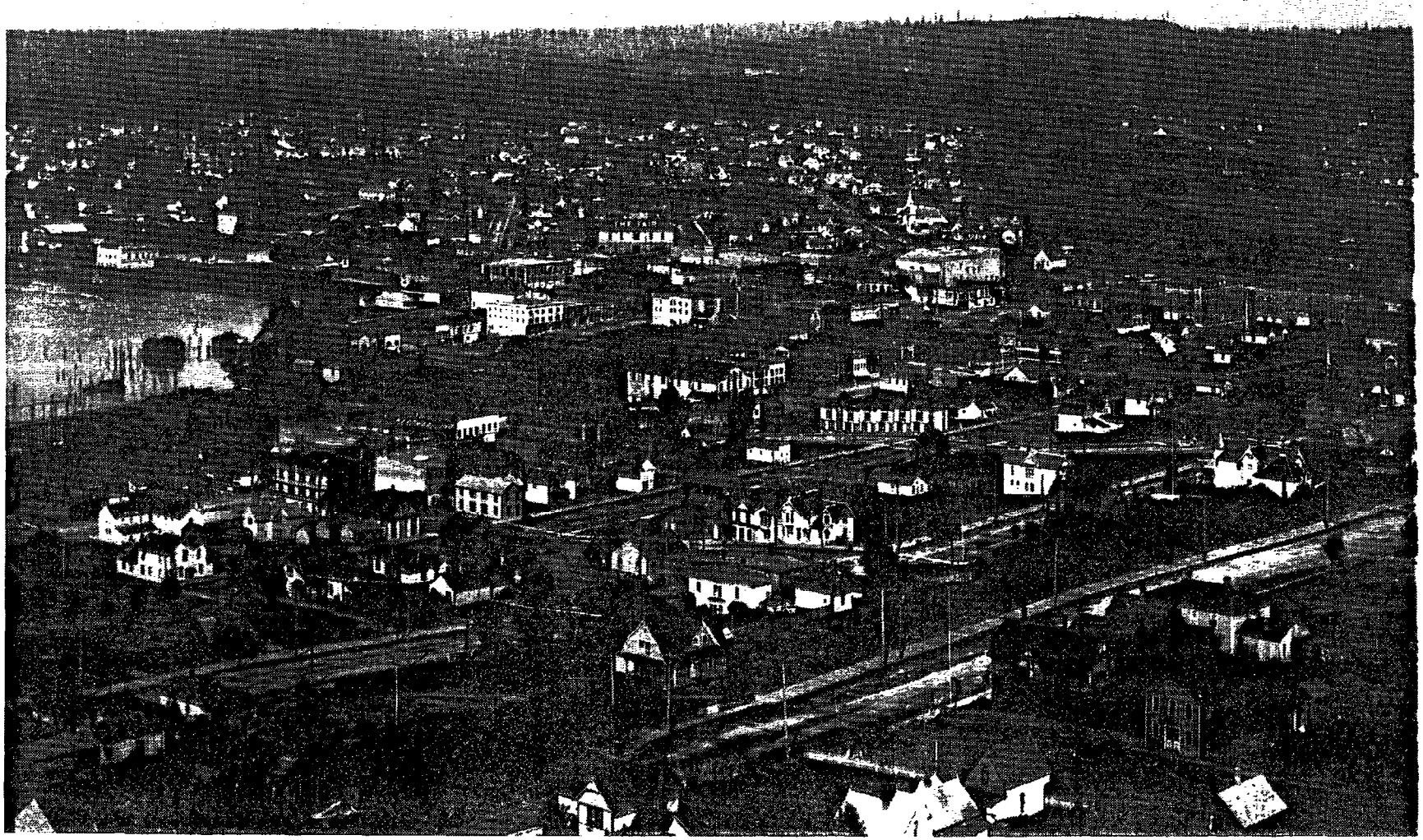


Figure 2
Panaromic View of Bellingham Bay, Circa 1911



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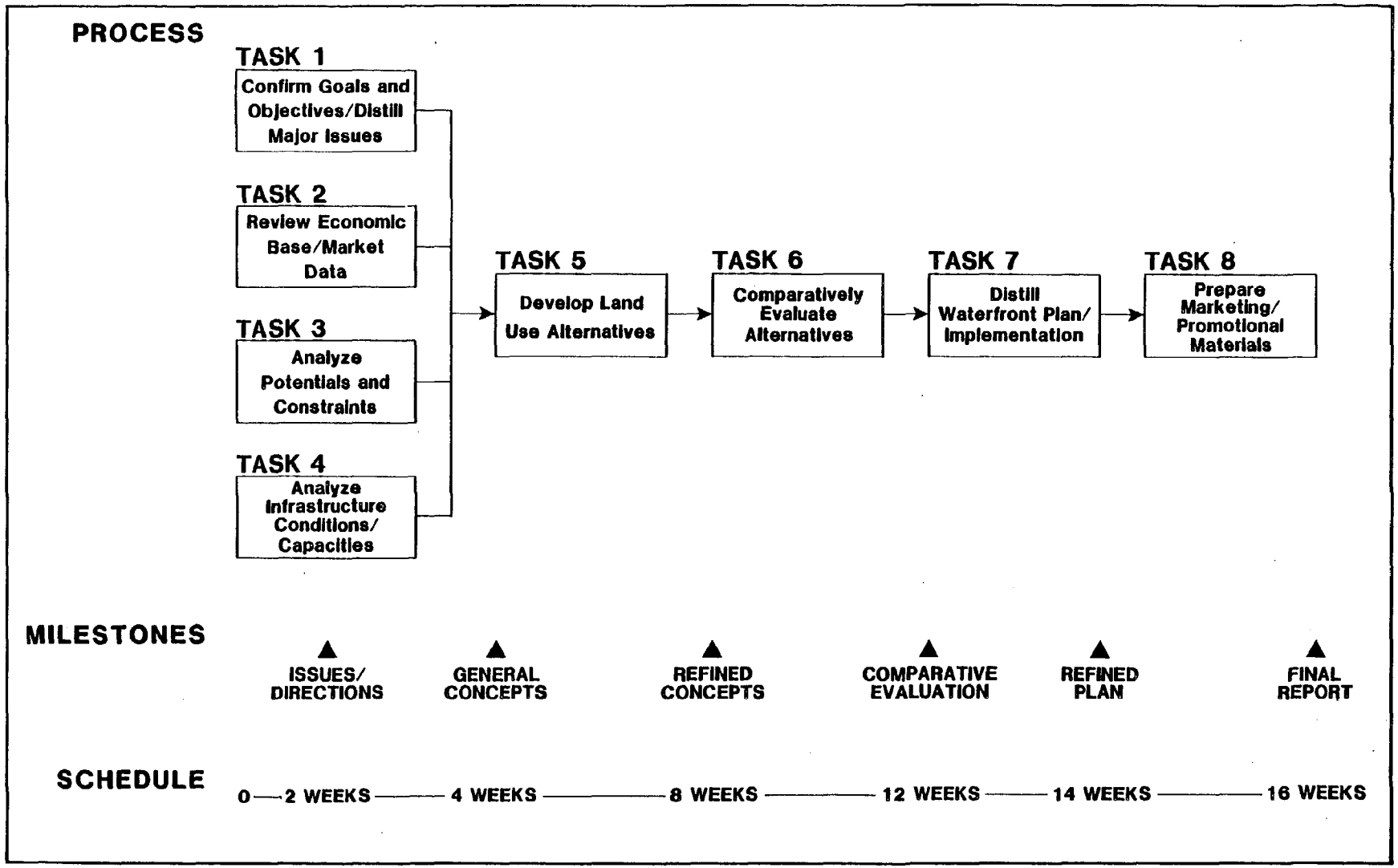

Figure 3

Study Process and Schedule

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

PURPOSE

The study's purpose was to prepare a viable plan to direct Central Waterfront development that:

- Anticipates events
- Creates opportunities
- Is realistic
- Supports all key interests

Specific sites for development were identified to determine the appropriate type and character of the development and suggest strategies to overcome likely obstacles. Marketing techniques and materials were also prepared to assist with plan implementation.

PROCESS

The eight-step approach depicted in Figure 3 featured a "charrette" process or series of intensive participatory work sessions early in the process and then repeated throughout the study at key decision points. The sessions allowed continuing interaction, a "buying into" eventual results and made the best use of everyone's time given the short study schedule. Participants included the City of Bellingham, the Port of Bellingham, Georgia-Pacific, the Fourth Corner Development Group and the general public. Direction was provided by a Mayor appointed Task Force, a "hands on" Technical Committee, and regularly scheduled public meetings. More detailed findings of the study tasks are described in Section III: Planning Background.

Four initial tasks established the basis for the first key charrette.

Task 1: Review and confirm public/private sector goals and objectives for the Bellingham Central Waterfront and distill major issues.

Task 2: Update and analyze economic base, market conditions, and fiscal impacts for existing and forecast land uses.

Task 3: Determine development potentials and constraints, considering both physical/environmental and regulatory elements.

Task 4: Critically review infrastructure (roads and utilities) conditions, capacities, and development limits.

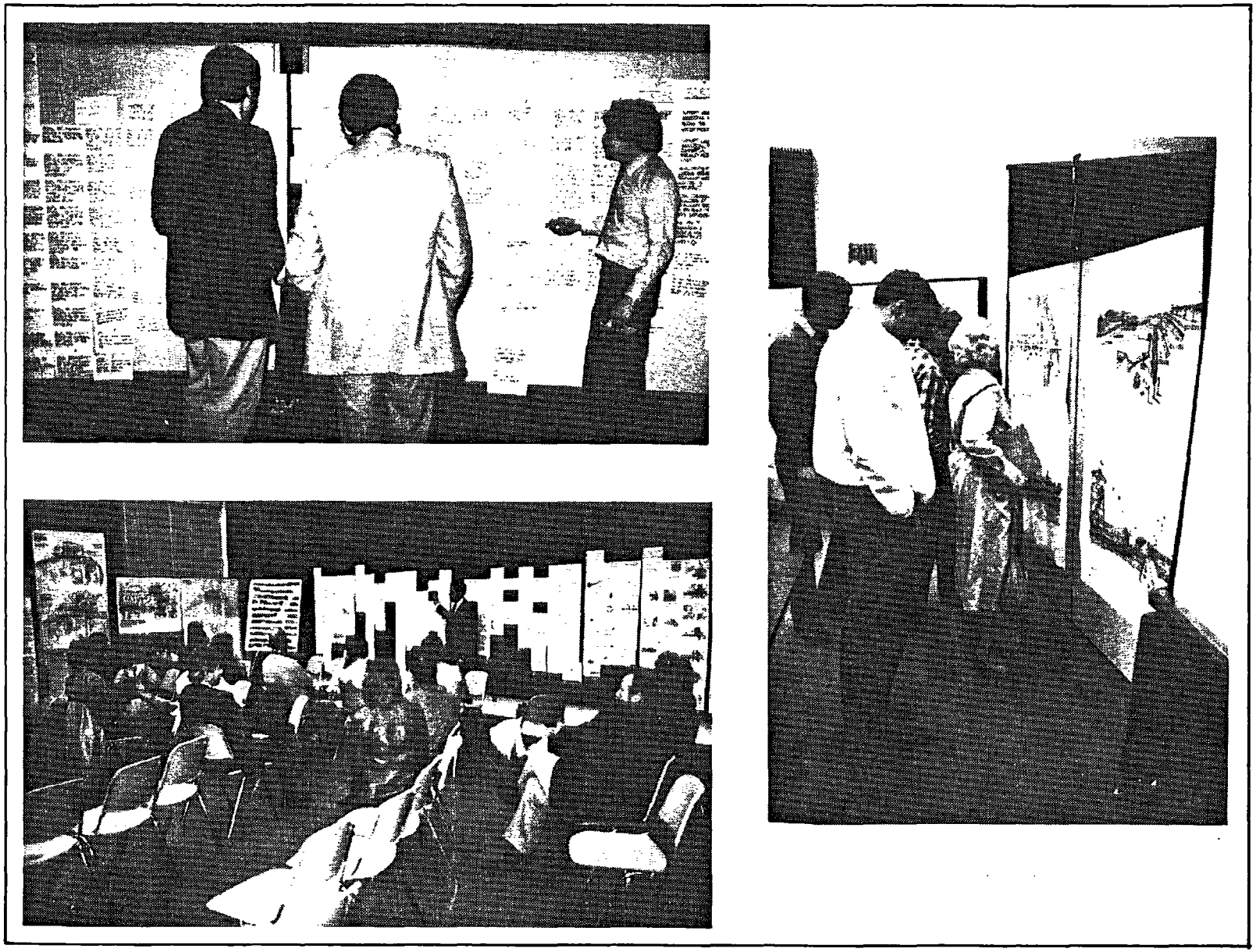

Figure 4
The Charrette Process

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

The initial charrette produced significant, creative results and synthesized input from all key community interests. With input from participants, Task 5 was completed.

Task 5: Develop market/physical-based land use alternatives for the near- and long-term.

The alternatives were the subject of the concepts charrette. The alternatives were a synthesis of ideas tempered by practical facts and forecasts. The next task was:

Task 6: Comparatively evaluate alternatives per prioritized criteria.

The evaluation criteria was distilled from previously expressed goals and objectives. The analysis and recommendations were presented for discussion, and with a selected direction, the Plan was refined.

Task 7: Distill a Central Waterfront Development Plan and Implementation Strategy.

A final presentation of the plan was made to the Task Force and Technical Committee. Presentations were also made to the Planning Commission, City Council and other groups including the Mayor's Advisory Committee, Park Board, Chamber of Commerce, City Center Development Authority, Port of Bellingham Commission and Fourth Corner Development Group. This report documents the study process and development plan. To assist with continuing implementation, the final task was completed.

Task 8: Prepare marketing and promotional materials to assist with plan implementation.

The specific targets and purpose of the prospectus was determined to make best use of the resources.

The timing of the study was 16 weeks. The schedule of major events is shown on the process graphic (see Figure 3).

The problem-solving approach was based on an analysis of forces that influence land use and development. The following graphic shows these forces which all contribute to Bellingham's Central Waterfront future in differing degress.

The entire process was an intensive one with close cooperation and participation by all interests.

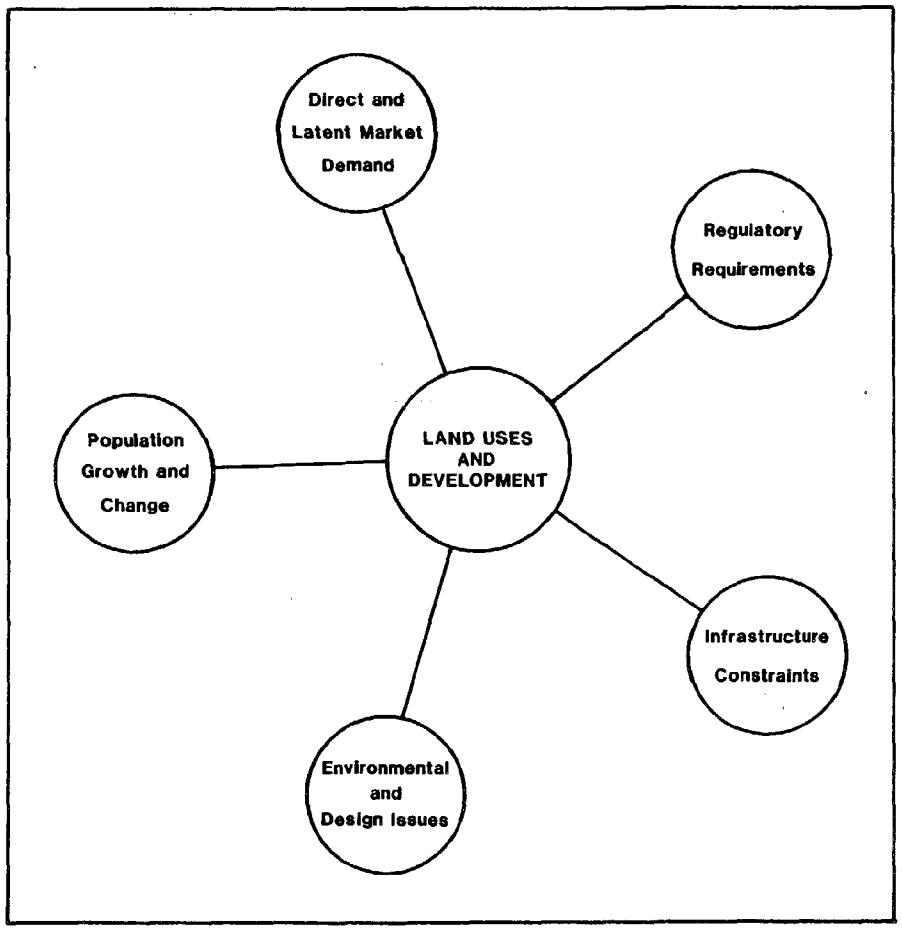

Figure 5
Forces That Influence Land Uses

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Development Plan expresses goals and objectives for overall direction. The plan itself is described by three elements: 1) a Framework Plan that generally defines the land use and circulation concept and key principles or "building block" ideas; 2) a series of Design Policies that establish standards for desired change; and 3) Improvement Projects which are a set of phased and prioritized public/private actions. An implementation outline is also provided to orchestrate the realization of the plan.

STATUS

Recommendations were presented to the Bellingham Planning Commission on June 4, 1986. The Commission acted to concur with the Plan concept and initiated land use changes.

Recommendations were made to the City Council Planning Committee at a work session on June 16, 1986. The City Council unanimously approved the Central Waterfront Plan concept. A motion was made to initiate Land Use Development Ordinance amendments.

The City is pursuing identified funding sources and integrating a first stage of projects with the 1987 Capital Budget. Land use changes are also being guided through the adoption process. The summary, promotional brochure is being used to communication opportunities available in the Central Waterfront. Plan support and momentum are high as favorable change is already underway and expected to continue.

Development Plan

PLAN OVERVIEW

The Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan is the guide to manage physical change. It expresses the results of a planning process and offers practical solutions to the major issues. Underlying aspirations are specifically stated in goals and objectives. The development plan is described by three elements:

- Framework Plan, which defines the general land use and circulation concept for both the Influence Area and Target Area and sets forth development concept principles.

- Design Policies, flexible standards to implement the orderly change which allows for interpretation in the exact nature of future improvements.

- Improvement Projects, essentially a phased action program of public and private site-specific recommendations to occur over the next six to ten years.

The Plan is purposely neither extravagant nor does it require fundamental change. Rather, it takes a simple and direct approach to satisfying local needs and should be implemented rather easily with well directed action. The Plan embodies a public and private sector commitment which must continue to achieve desired results. It will be like a newly-polished pair of well-worn, comfortable shoes.

An illustrative plan of the Central Waterfront development is shown in Figure 5. Selected views at key locations are also shown in Figures 6 through 10. These diagrams are intended to depict one interpretation of the concept. The concept is further detailed in subsequent sections.

The dilemma of a development plan is recognized with the contradictory requirements of showing an end development condition but at the same time creating development flexibility to respond to changing conditions. The key to achieving both is in the structure of the Development Plan with a general Framework Plan and more specific Design Policies. These together offer a management tool to direct the waterfront's evolution. The Improvement Projects establish immediate projects which are steps toward implementing the Plan.

It is acknowledged (and expected) that conditions will change over time and that the application of the "patterns" will vary. The combination of results-oriented projects within an overall framework and subject to design policy guidelines will allow the necessary plan responsiveness to change.

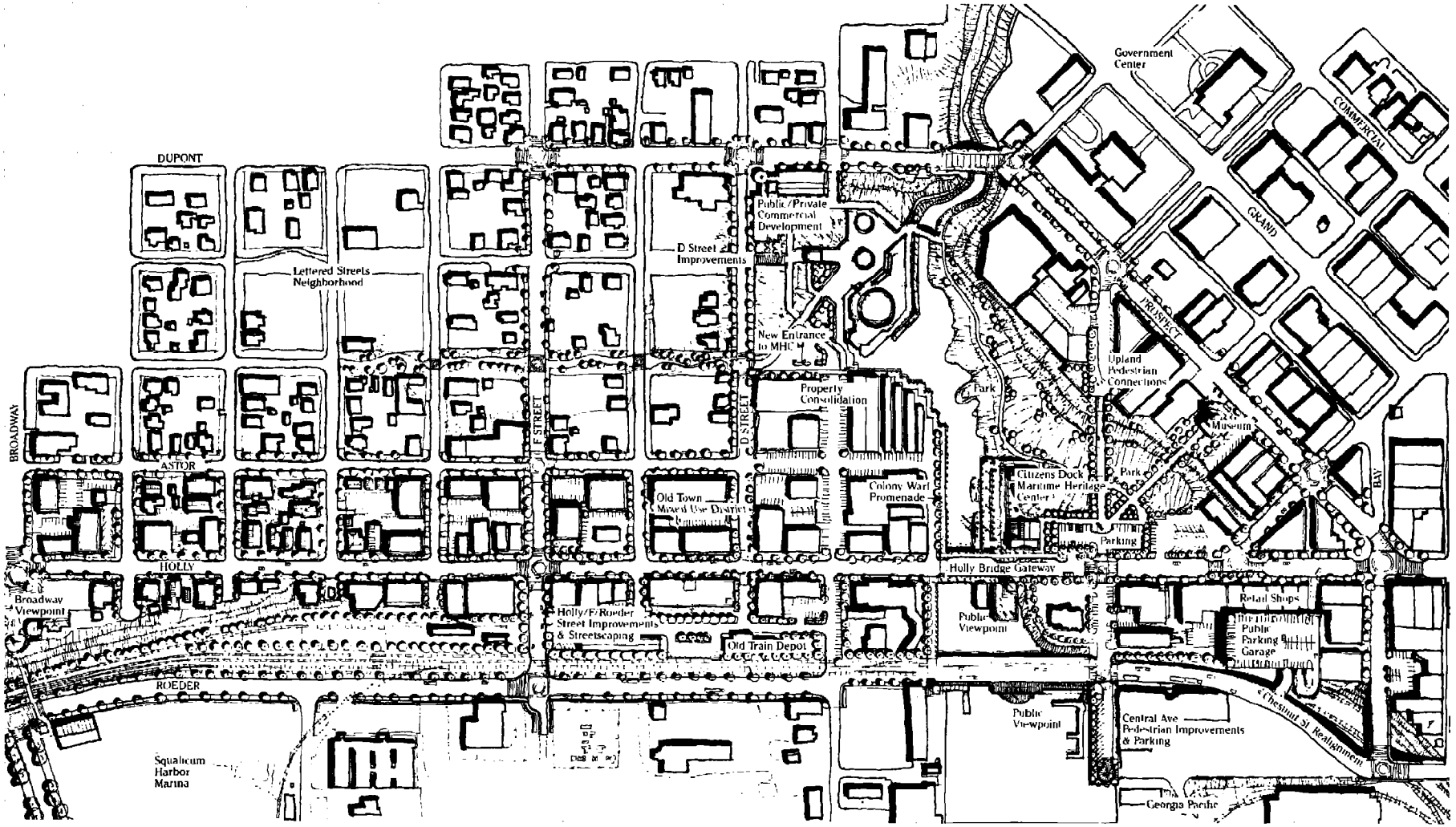

Figure 6

Illustrative Concept

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 7

Holly Street Bridge Gateway with Citizens Dock

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

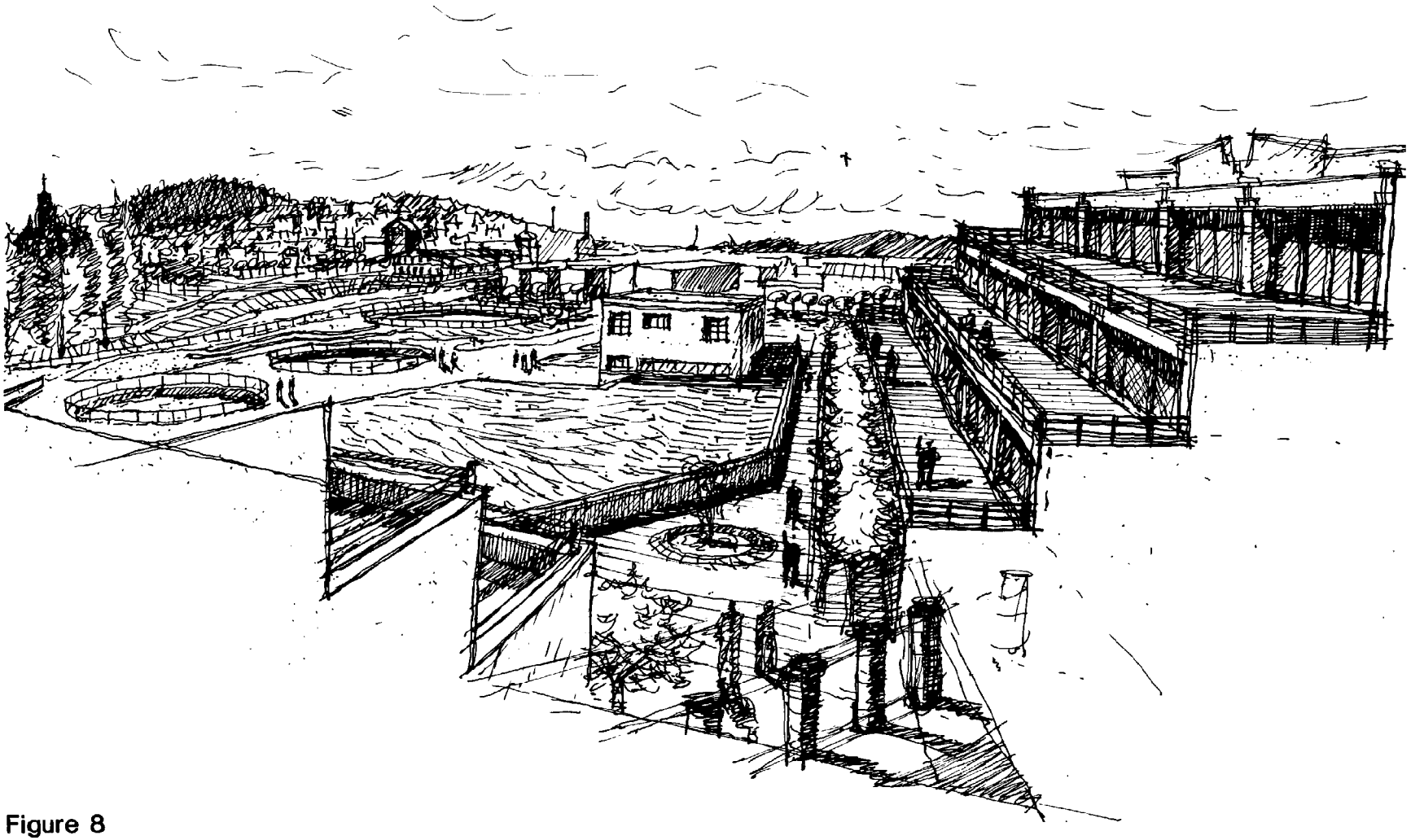

Figure 8

Joint Public/Private Development at Dupont and 'D' Streets

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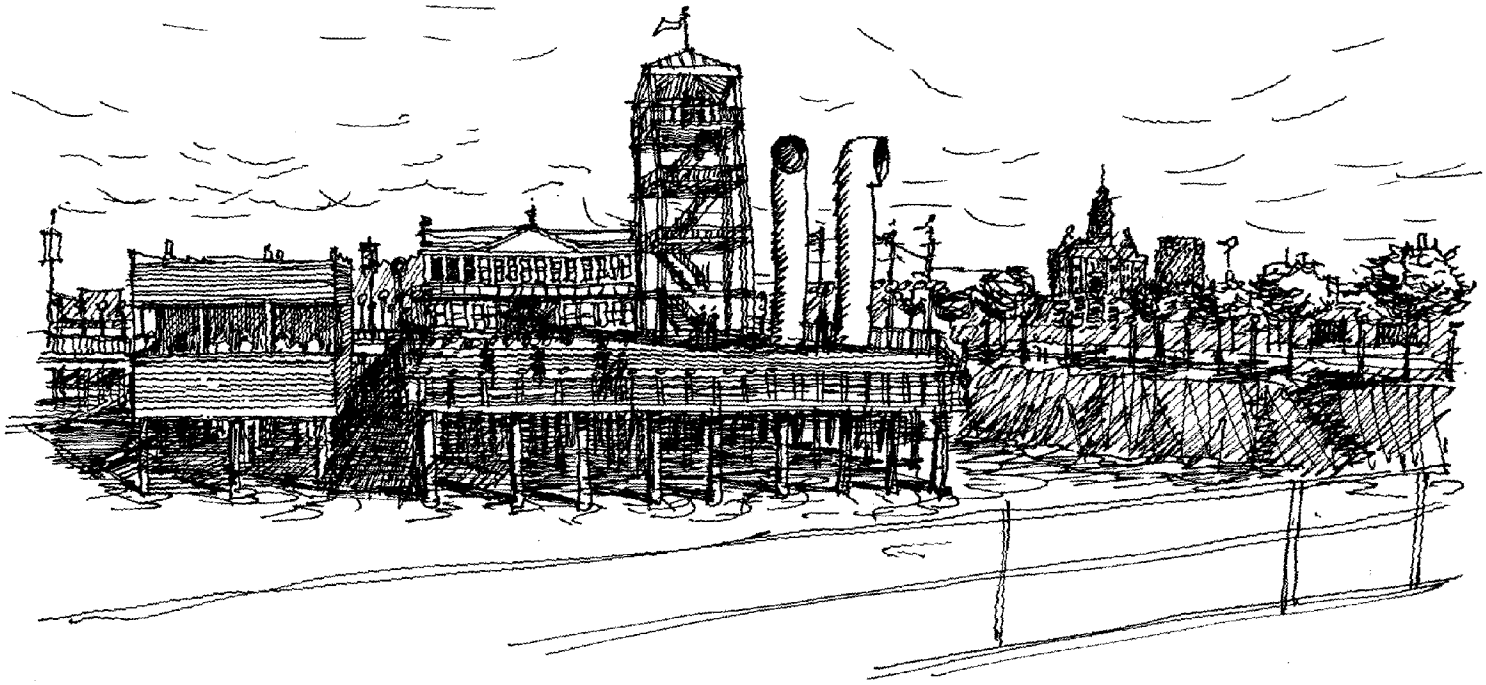


Figure 9

Public Viewpoint at Holly Street Bridge

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

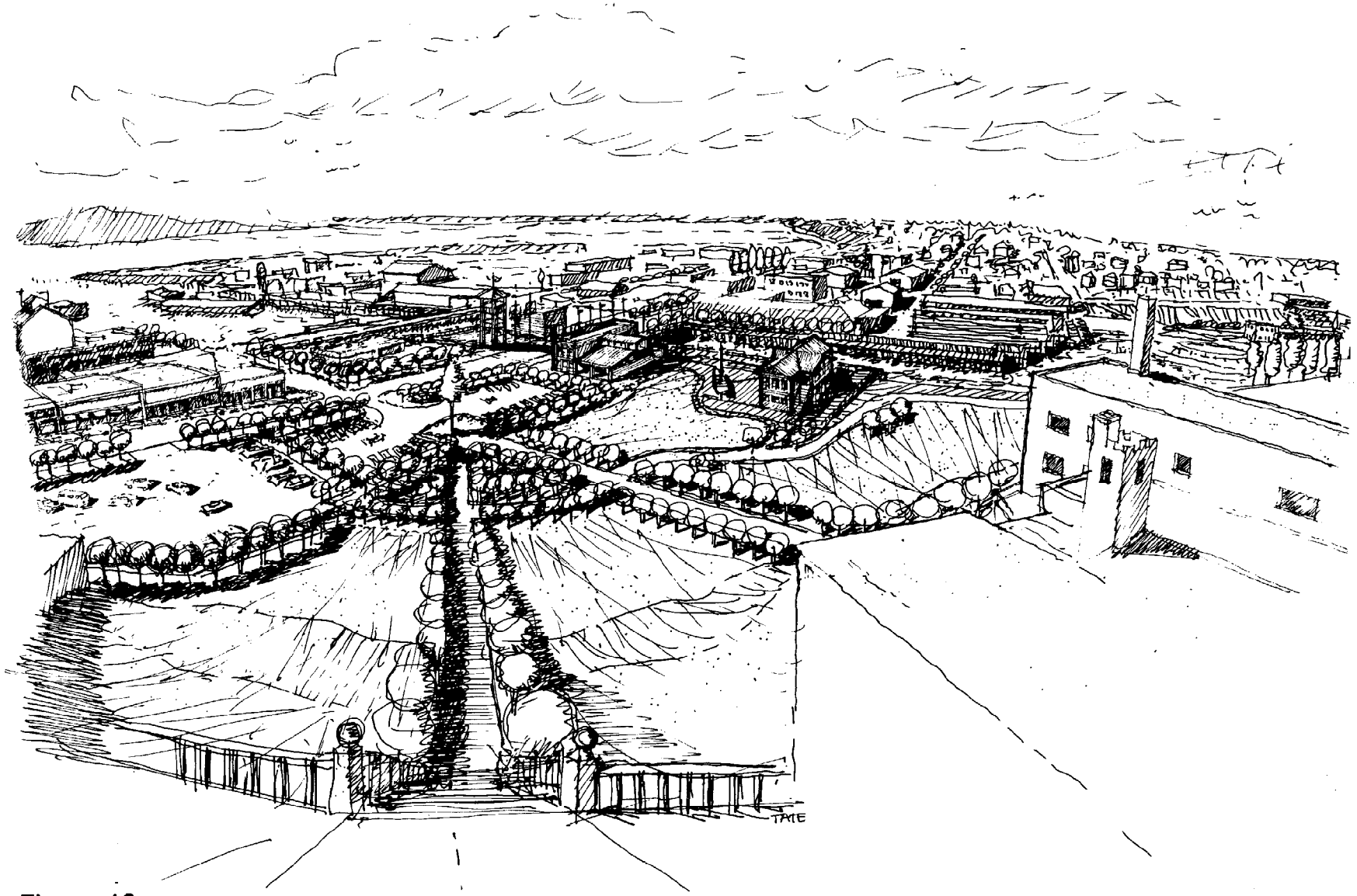


Figure 10

View of Park and Maritime Interpretive Center from Museum

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 11

Citizens Dock Pavilion at Holly Street Bridge

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The work sessions with the major Central Waterfront interests and citizens sought to define issues and aspirations for the future.

The key issues that were defined are summarized as:

- The need to produce an implementable plan
- The type, amount and location of various land uses must be defined
- Economic development must be created
- The need for group consensus for any realistic action

The concerns for the Central Waterfront were for physical improvements that also stimulated economic growth. The presence of heavy industry (Georgia-Pacific) and a variety of retail, commercial, recreational, residential, and support uses created compatibility questions. A basic conflict was the incompatibility of increased people activity and industry operations. Pressures related to all issues had mounted and timing was appropriate for their resolution.

Both officially adopted goals and more informally expressed ones were collected and discussed. More specific objectives were also derived:

Goals

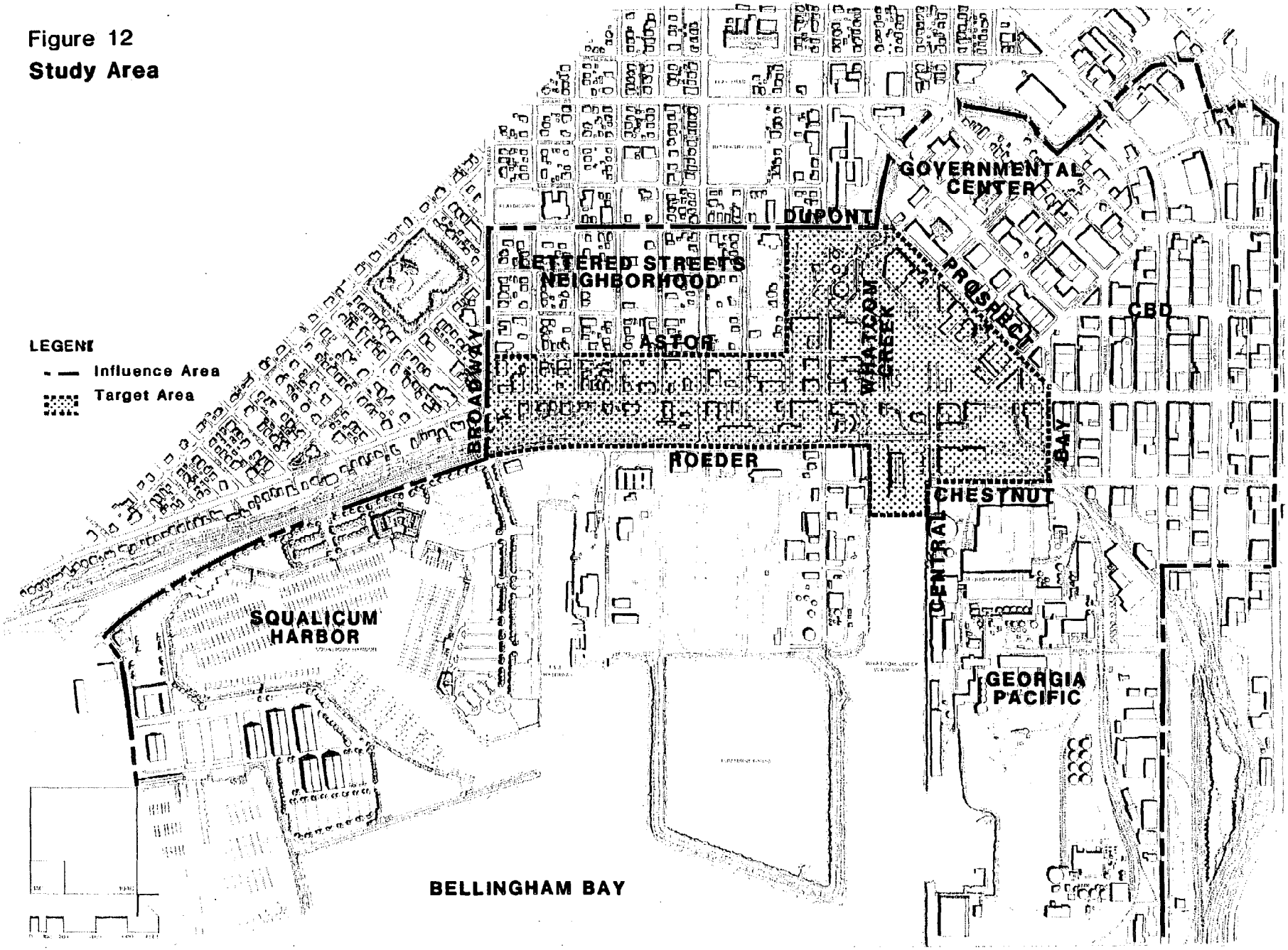
- Stimulate the area's economic vitality
- Improve circulation along the downtown/Squalicum corridor
- Assure a compatible mix of land uses
- Create incentives for project implementation
- Promote public/private cooperation
- Create a Whatcom Creek focus
- Celebrate the Old Town history and culture
- Promote understanding of a working waterfront

Objectives

- Resolve the Citizens Dock issue
- Encourage investment (not just market response)
- Change zoning
- Protect and enhance existing businesses
- Improve Roeder and Holly Streets
- Improve Maritime Heritage Center
- Control nuisances
- Create land use flexibility

It is with this direction and intent that the Development Plan sets a standard for local community improvement.

Figure 12
Study Area



Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

FRAMEWORK PLAN

Study Area

The study area for the Central Waterfront Development Plan consists of an approximate 63-acre Target Area and a larger Influence Area shown in Figure 12. The plan is primarily concerned with the Target Area but considers relationships and impacts within the larger context.

Land Use and Circulation Framework

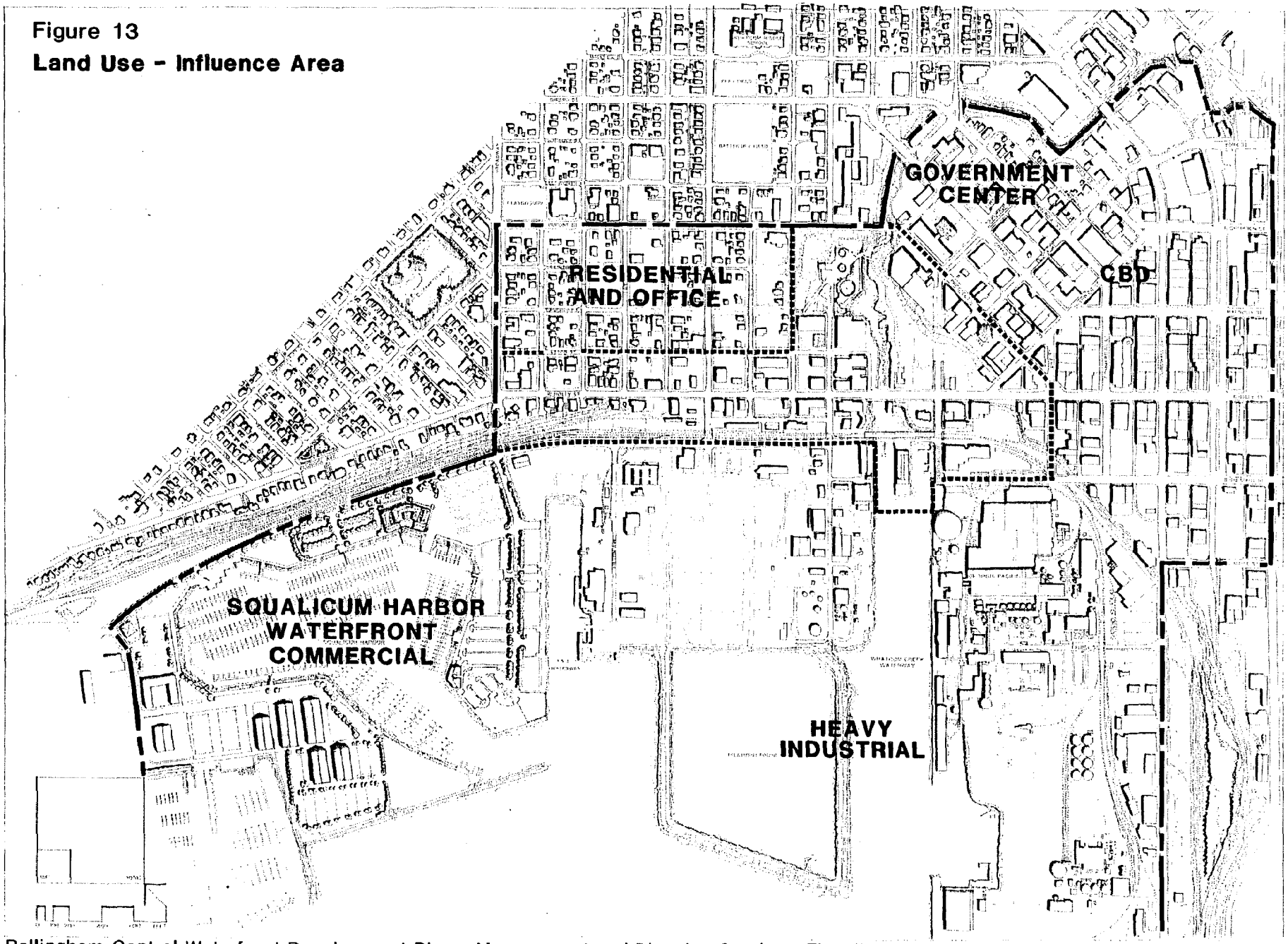
The general land use and circulation concept for the study area are shown in Figure 13 through Figure 17. This "framework" establishes the overall direction for improvement projects. It also establishes the Central Waterfront's function within Bellingham.

The goals for the Influence Area include an improved relationship with the Central Business District (CBD), the industrial waterfront and Squalicum Harbor (Figure 13). A mixed use concept with a winder range of waterfront commercial, retail, office, residential, and public/cultural/recreational uses is envisioned for the Central Waterfront Target Area (Figure 14). The most significant changes are expanding the retail and light manufacturing uses allowed, changing the area adjacent to Georgia-Pacific to allow industrial uses and increased allowable densities in portions of the Lettered Streets Neighborhood.

Circulation systems (vehicular and pedestrian) are interconnected within the Target Area and consistent with city-wide systems. The most significant changes include the Chestnut Street realignment, "C" and Astor 2-block street vacations and upgrades to "D" Street (Figures 15, 16 and 17).

Figure 13

Land Use - Influence Area



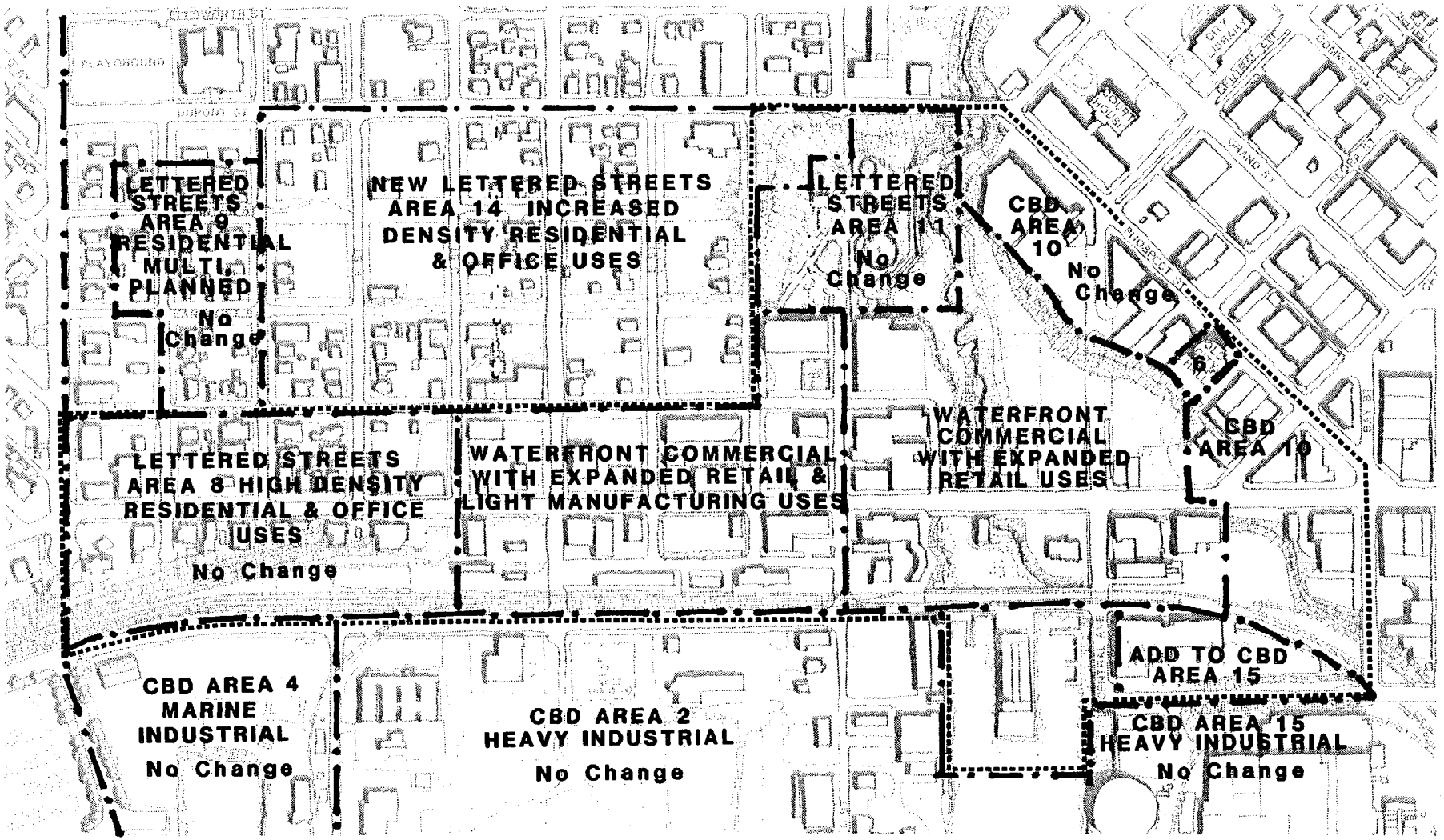
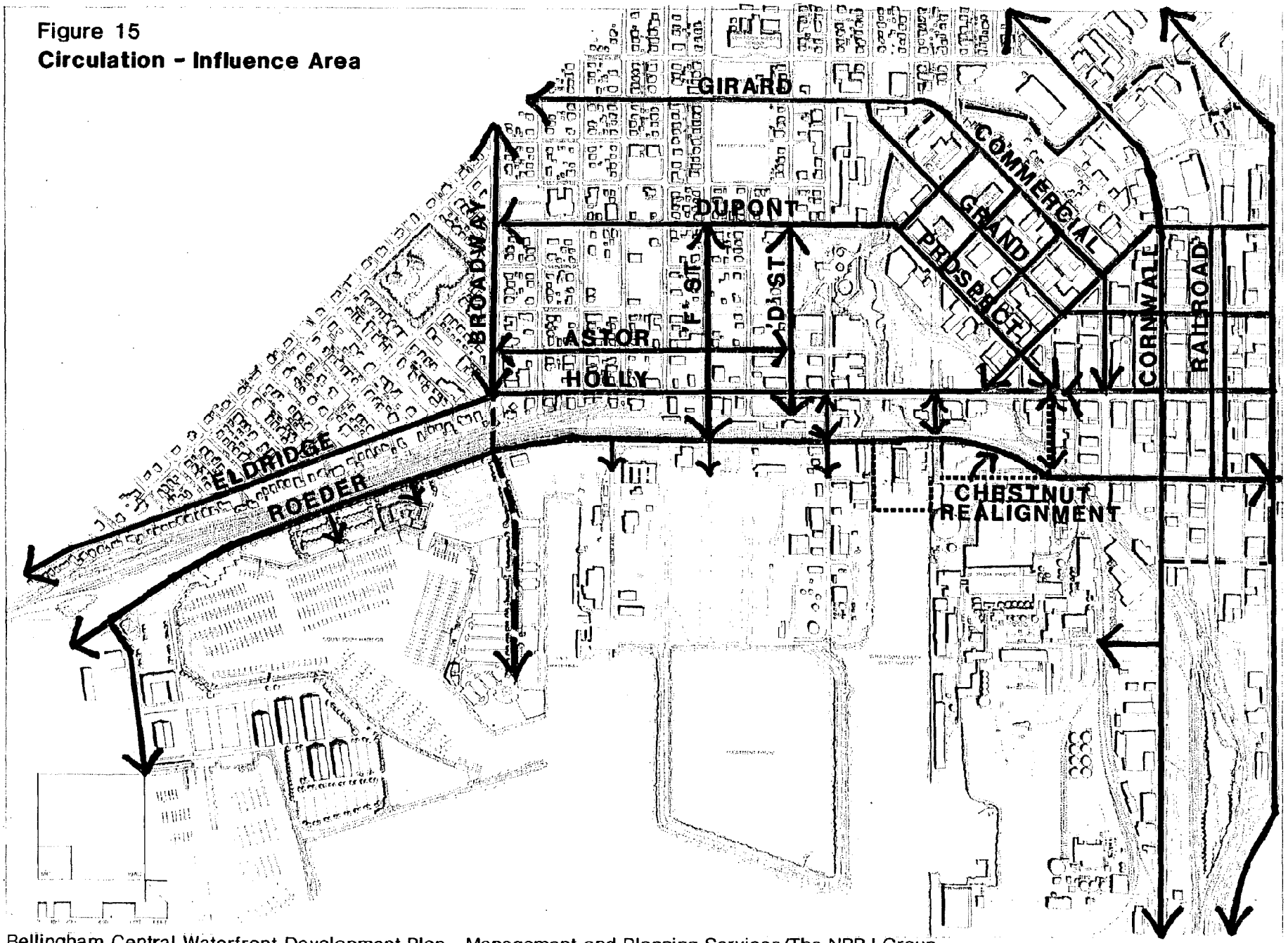


Figure 14

Land Use - Target Area

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 15
Circulation - Influence Area



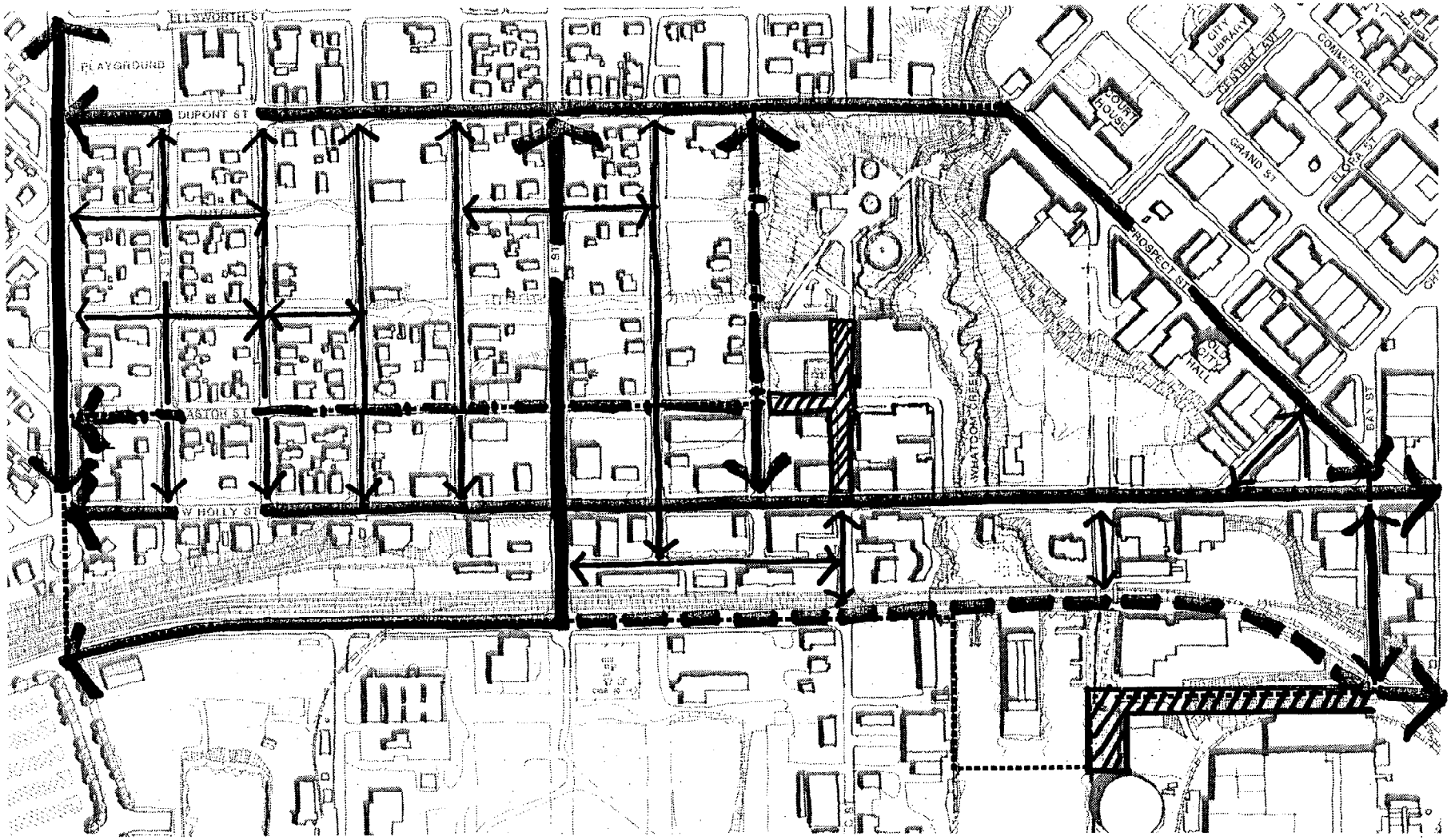


Figure 16

Circulation - Target Area

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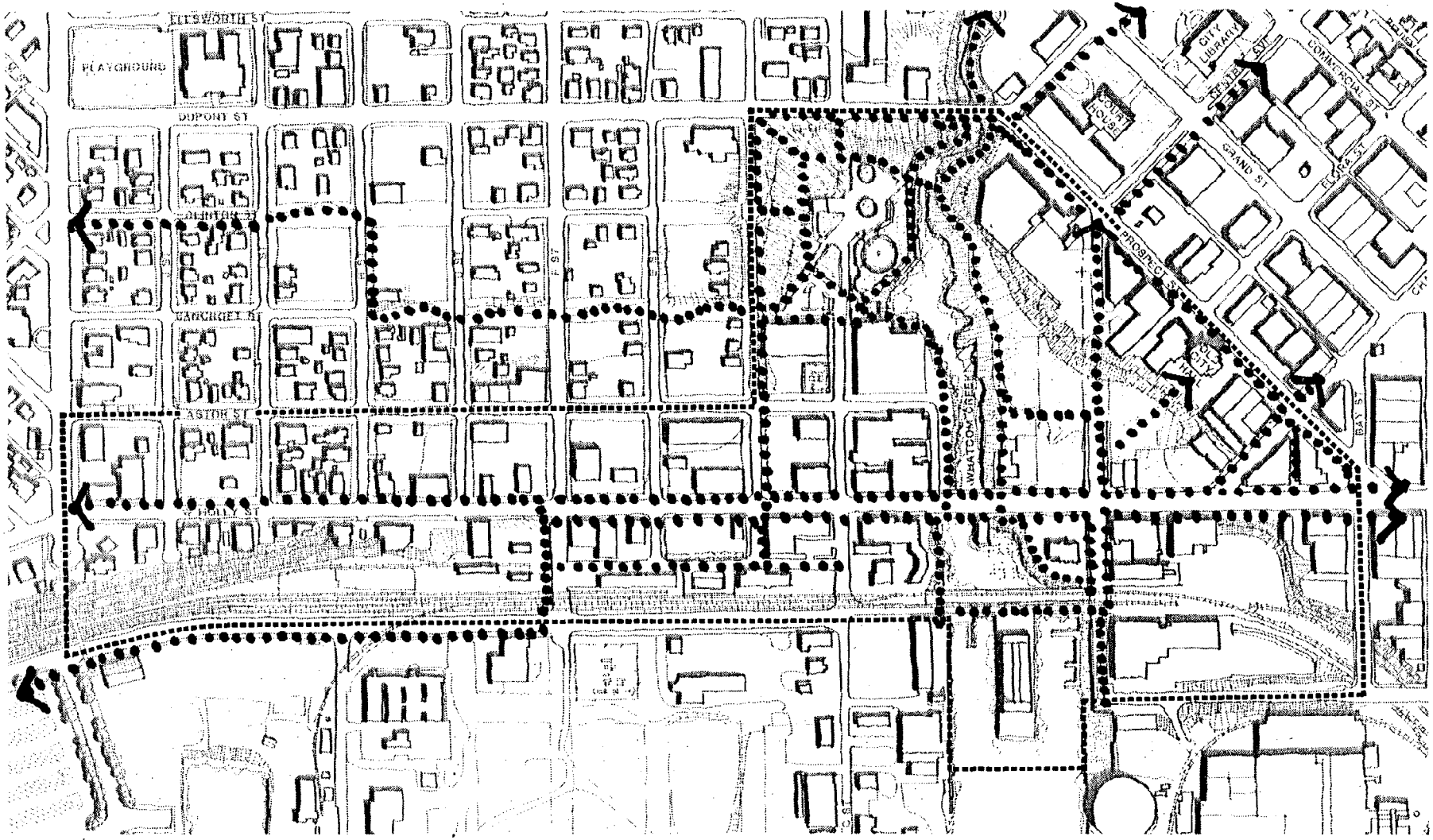


Figure 17

Principal Pedestrian Routes - Target Area

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

0 100 500FT

Framework Plan Objectives

Influence Area

- Provide a comprehensive and coherent plan that links the CBD, the Central Waterfront, and Squalicum Harbor
- Protect and enhance the Lettered Streets residential areas from potential nuisances
- Protect and enhance industrial users
- Encourage economic growth and employment opportunities within the Influence Area
- Enhance the environmental quality throughout the Influence Area.

Target Area

- Change land use designations as necessary to allow broader range of uses
- Use capital improvements/amenities as incentives for economic growth
- Improve public access to the waterfront
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian access between the CBD and Squalicum Harbor thoughout Target Area
- Improve overall environmental quality of the area
- Protect and enhance established businesses and avoid displacement and nuisances
- Promote the historical, cultural and environmental legacy of the area

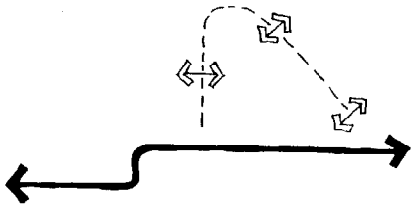
Framework Plan Building Blocks

The Framework Plan also consists of nine interrelated urban design ideas or "building blocks." These conceptual patterns create further guidance for physical changes in the Central Waterfront. They are intended as "basic values" underlying growth and environmental quality in the Central Waterfront. They also offer "handles" to effectively deal with the area's issues.

Whatcom Creek Focus

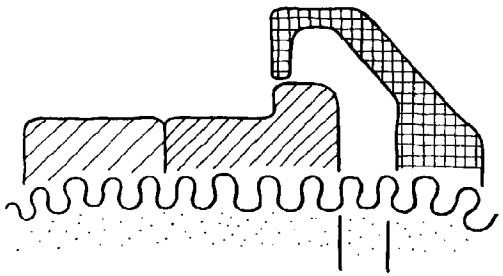
The "waterfront" includes more frontage along the Whatcom Creek than along Bellingham Bay. Given the major industrial presence and existing public park investment, the creek itself is a significant water feature and should be recognized. The recreation, educational, and open space amenities should be enhanced. The orientation of activity and development should be inward toward the creek to allow a side by side co-existance of seemingly incompatible uses.

Linkages



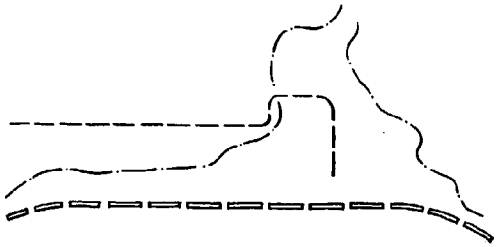
The functional and visual connection between downtown and Squalicum Harbor should be improved. Vehicular circulation should be encouraged through the Central Waterfront while also creating pedestrian amenities and upland walking routes. Movement through and within the area should be organized to complete a larger network. The Central Waterfront will become a special place on the way to other destinations. The park open space and related improvements will become destinations as well.

Land Use Mix



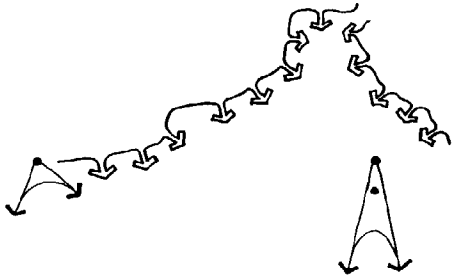
The area waterside of Roeder Avenue is envisioned as a "working waterfront" with heavy water-related/dependent industrial activities. Upland from Roeder Avenue a mix of compatible land uses is envisioned. Public/recreational activities will continue along the creek. Light manufacturing, retail, and commercial uses will dominate with continuation of residential/offices within the Lettered Streets area.

Land Use Interfaces/ Compatibility



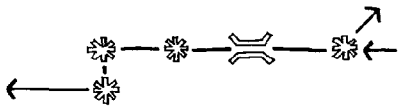
The adjacent conditions and physical relationships among different land uses become important with a wide range and mix of activities. The parcel-by-parcel compatibility is as important as transitions to nearby neighborhoods. The intent is to encourage a sensitivity and physical development that allows co-existence. The uses of the Central Waterfront support adjacent areas, including the downtown office core and government center. Specialty retail will be a part of the mix which is not intended to compete with other retail centers.

Vistas and Overlooks



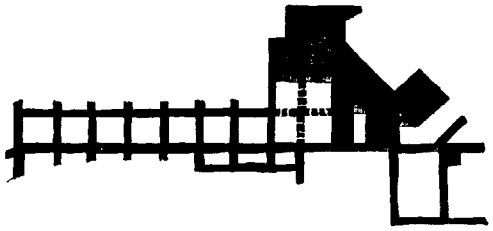
Topographic conditions, alignment of streets and the presence of distant over-water views and industrial activity all create opportunities for vistas and overlooks. Scenic distant views as well as visual access and improved understanding of the "working waterfront" are significant opportunities. The intent is to capture these visual linkages in physical improvements.

Gateways



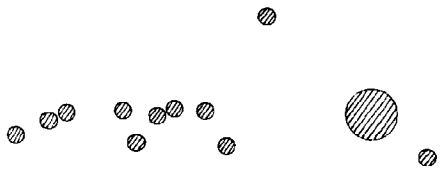
A sense of place must be created for a memorable experience. As people move through the Central Waterfront, key locations can be celebrated and distinguished by design features. The Holly Street Bridge is a particular "crossroad" where a gateway to the Central Waterfront should be established. Transitions to the CBD and Squalicum Harbor could also be accented.

Public Right of Ways/ City-Owned Property



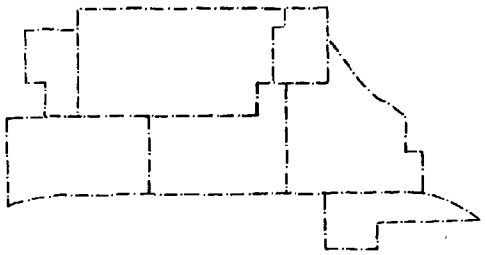
The City is a major land owner in the area. City actions with this property can be significant to stimulate other development as well as to establish the expected level of quality of the environment. Public/ private partnerships are suggested to agressively increase economic revitalization. The expectation is that the city will be a leader and partner for economic and physical improvement.

Vacant Parcels



Several large, undeveloped properties within the area present mixed expectations. New development is readily accommodated but the current neglected condition creates an image of an area in transition. A concerted effort is necessary to infill these "missing teeth in the smile." Confidence-building public projects are intended to increase private investment.

Zoning



The Bellingham Plan, Shoreline Management Master Program, and Land Use Development Ordinance all establish regulations to manage change. As conditions evolve over time, such standards must be reassessed and updated. Specific changes are suggested as part of the Central Waterfront Development Plan primarily to create incentives for economic development and to reinforce land use compatibility. The effectiveness of these changes must be monitored, and in the future, further revisions made if appropriate.

DESIGN POLICIES

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide development direction and change management consistent with the plan. They are a planning tool. While the comprehensive framework imposes requirements on distinct elements for continuity and consistency the framework also allows for flexibility in making detailed design decisions not possible at this time.

The guidelines seek to strike a balance between prescriptive enforcement of a total district and city concept, and recognition that conditions will change so all details cannot be accounted for now. The guidelines are also intended to stimulate public and private cooperation, commitment, and investment in the area's future. They are straightforward to allow increased predictability and should be interpreted broadly to be incentives to improvements. The guidelines are intended to be a working set of City policies that will be applied by planning staff during project reviews. They should be publicly available and become a part of the Bellingham Plan and Land Use Development Ordinance.

The Central Waterfront was analyzed and distinct subareas were defined where potentials could be captured and changes would contribute to overall improvement. These "Opportunity Areas" are shown in Figure 18.

Guidelines for the development of the Central Waterfront are described by the following eight topics. The Land Use and Scale/Intensity Guidelines are given by each Opportunity Area. The remaining guidelines are intended to apply throughout the Central Waterfront.

- Land Use and Scale/Intensity
- Circulation Systems
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Signage and Lighting
- Utilities
- Architectural Design
- District Edges/Influence Area

Illustrative applications of the plan ideas are shown by Opportunity Areas in the following series of diagrams (Figures 19 - 26). Note that these drawings are not intended to be detailed designs, but are depictions of how the conceptual ideas could be applied. They are intended to provide design policy guidance. Further descriptions of the Improvement Projects are detailed in the next section.

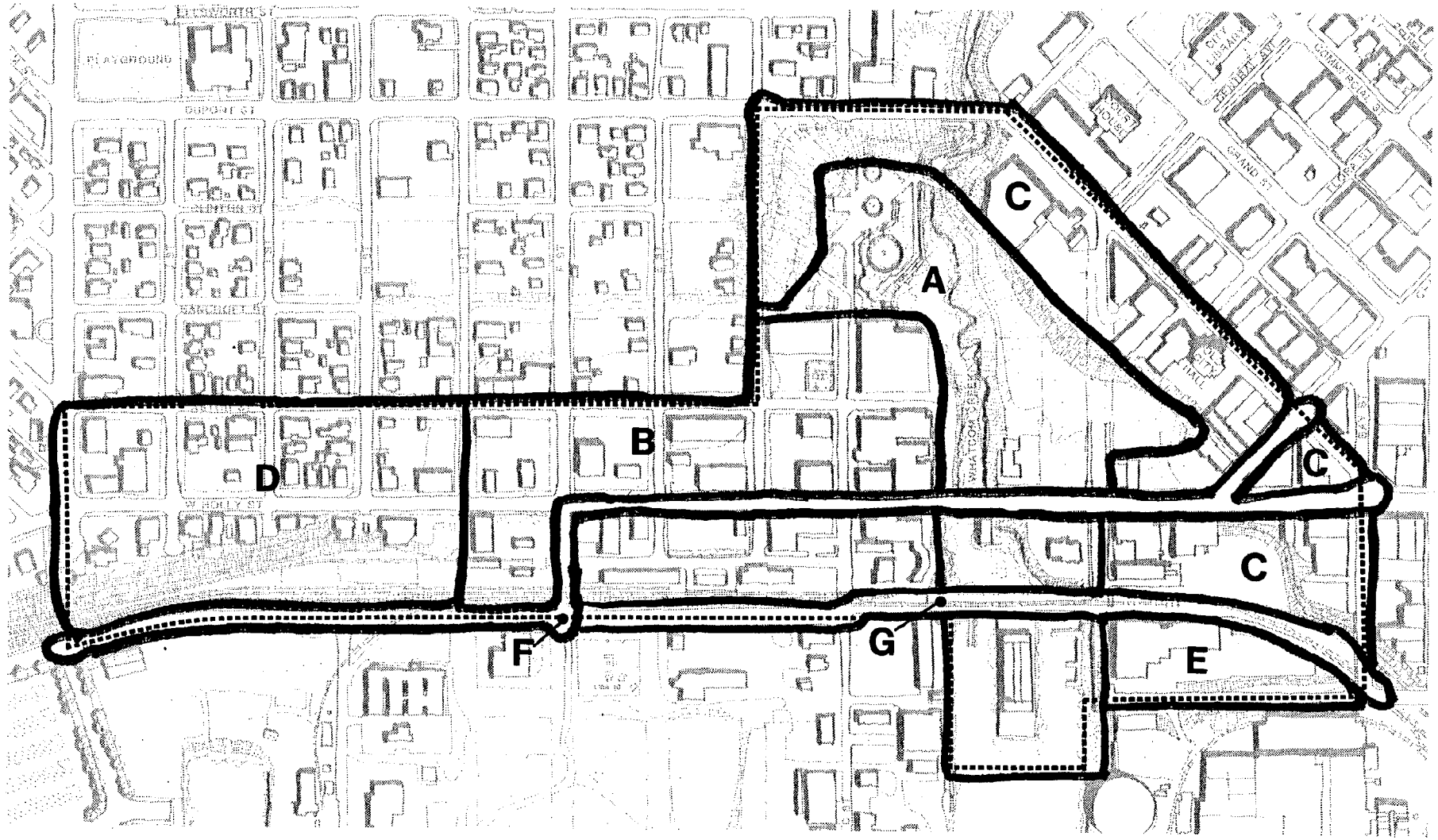


Figure 18
Opportunity Areas
Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

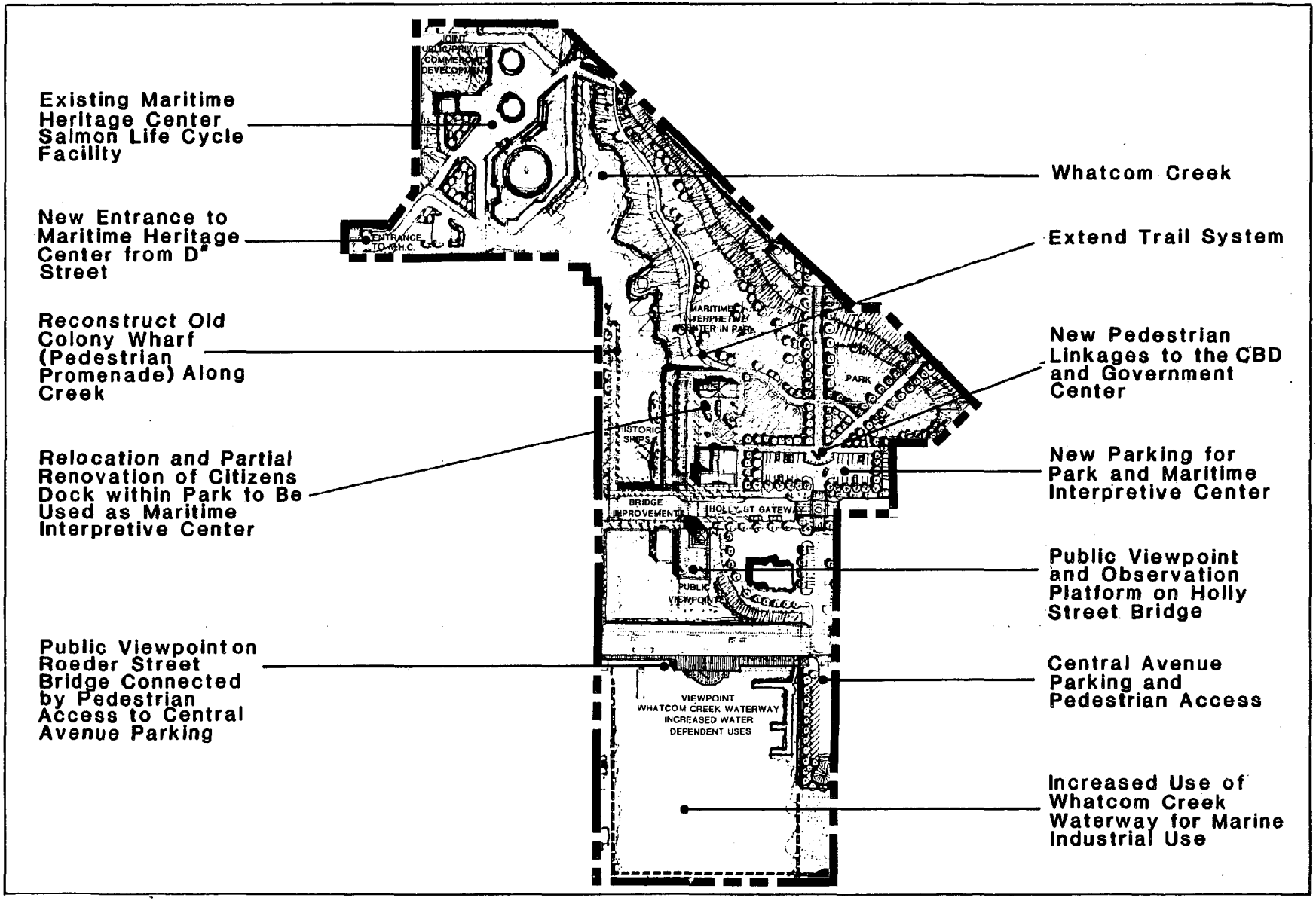


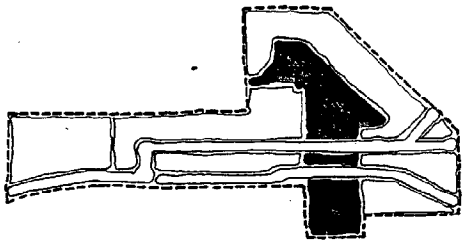
Figure 19

Opportunity Area A: Whatcom Creek Focus

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Land Use and Scale/Intensity

OPPORTUNITY AREA A
Whatcom Creek Focus



This area is the waterfront heart of the Central Waterfront. Dominant land uses will include public recreational/cultural/educational/open space with limited supporting commercial uses and parking. The Martime Heritage Center and uphill museum are integral parts of the area's function.

The area should primarily be a downtown public space with an accessible creek shoreline and surrounded by more intense building development. The space's concept is to be an "inward focus" where activities cluster around the park and water. This hub creates the linkage and transition to the surrounding Lettered Streets Neighborhood, Government Center, CBD, and Marine Industrial areas. Public visual access extends toward the waterway and Bellingham Bay. Planned improvement projects are intended to enhance this Whatcom Creek focus idea.

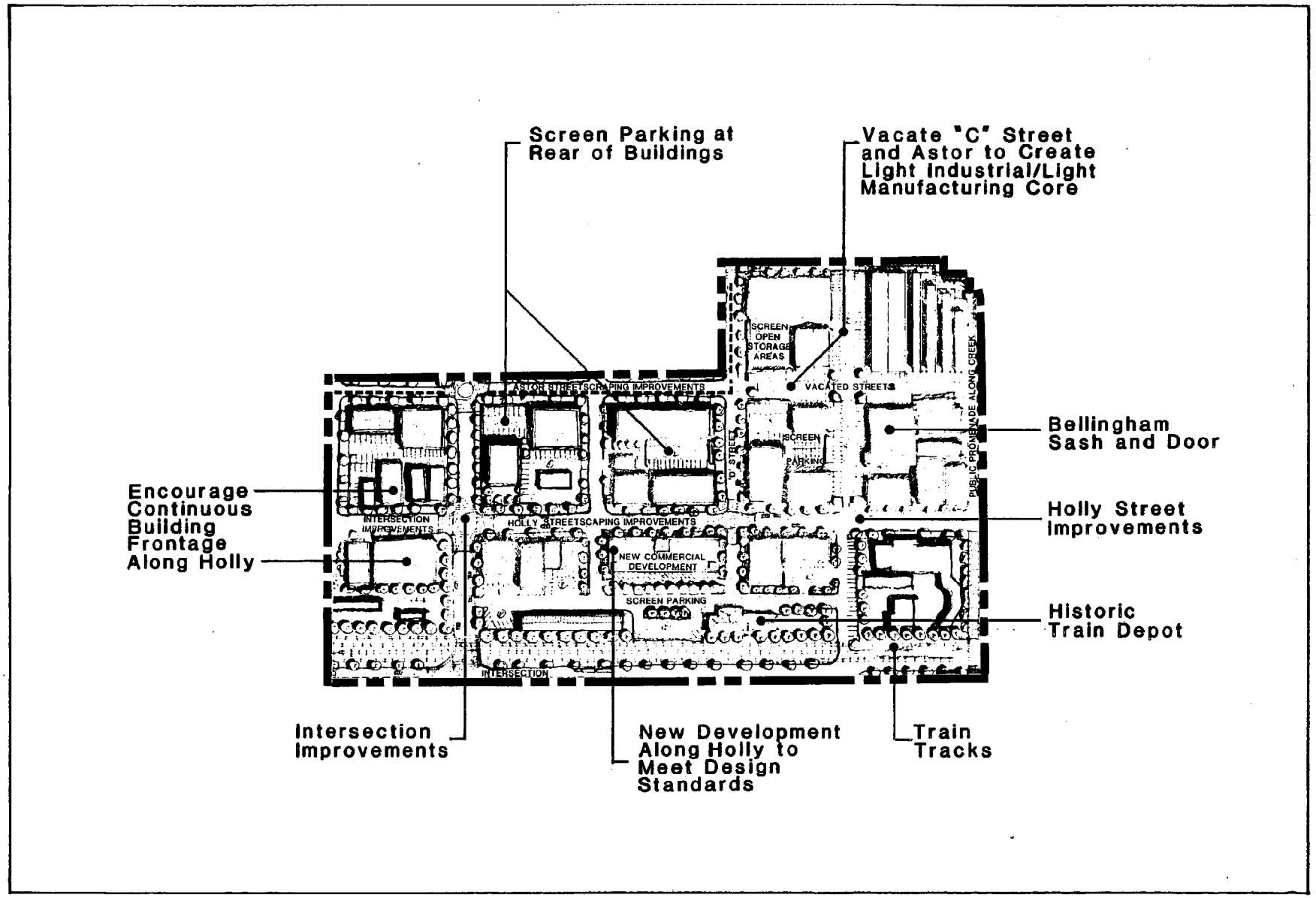
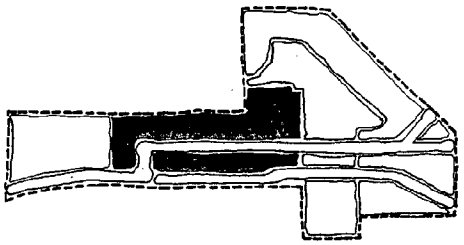


Figure 20

Opportunity Area B: "Old Town" Core

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA B
Old Town Core



A land use mix is envisioned which reinforces currently established activities while improving visual quality and an historic Old Town character is envisioned. A broad range of light manufacturing, retail (including non-water related uses), commercial, and supporting parking will be encouraged. The scale and intensity of development should continue to be subject to existing limits. Future development will largely be infill and redevelopment. The new should respect the old and fit within an improved context.

Two significant land use organizational principles are:

- Continuous building frontage along Holly Street
- Effective screening/nuisance control of outdoor storage and processing

The intent of the first principle is to spatially define the street corridor along Holly with continuous buildings at the street lot property lines. No setbacks of structures should be allowed. Retail activity and pedestrian-sensitive conditions should be encouraged. Blank, barren building walls should be discouraged. At a minimum building walls should be enlivened with graphics and color. Parking and other support/service functions should be located to the rear of the buildings, obscured from the street.

The second principle requires that outdoor storage and support activities to business be visually obscured. The screening must be effective when installed. Related noise, light/glare, and other operational environmental impacts should be controlled. A clean-up/fix-up campaign would also be appropriate to improve existing buildings.

The Old Town Core is to be a special place with an historic character. The land use and scale aspects should support this objective. Architectural character (materials, color, roof lines) as well as streetscape amenities must be coordinated with development. Guidelines for these topics are given in the following pages.

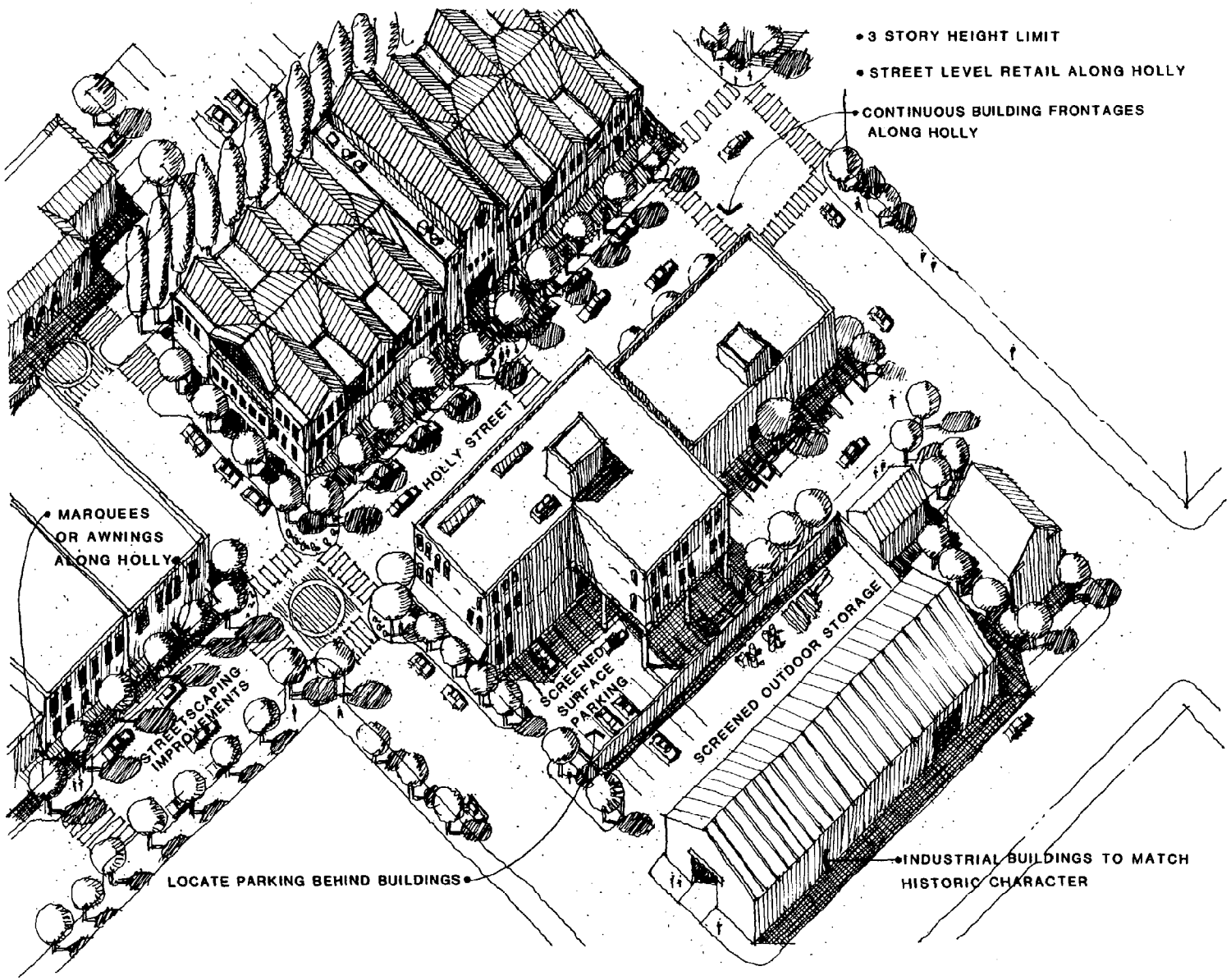


Figure 21

"Old Town" Core Development Standards

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

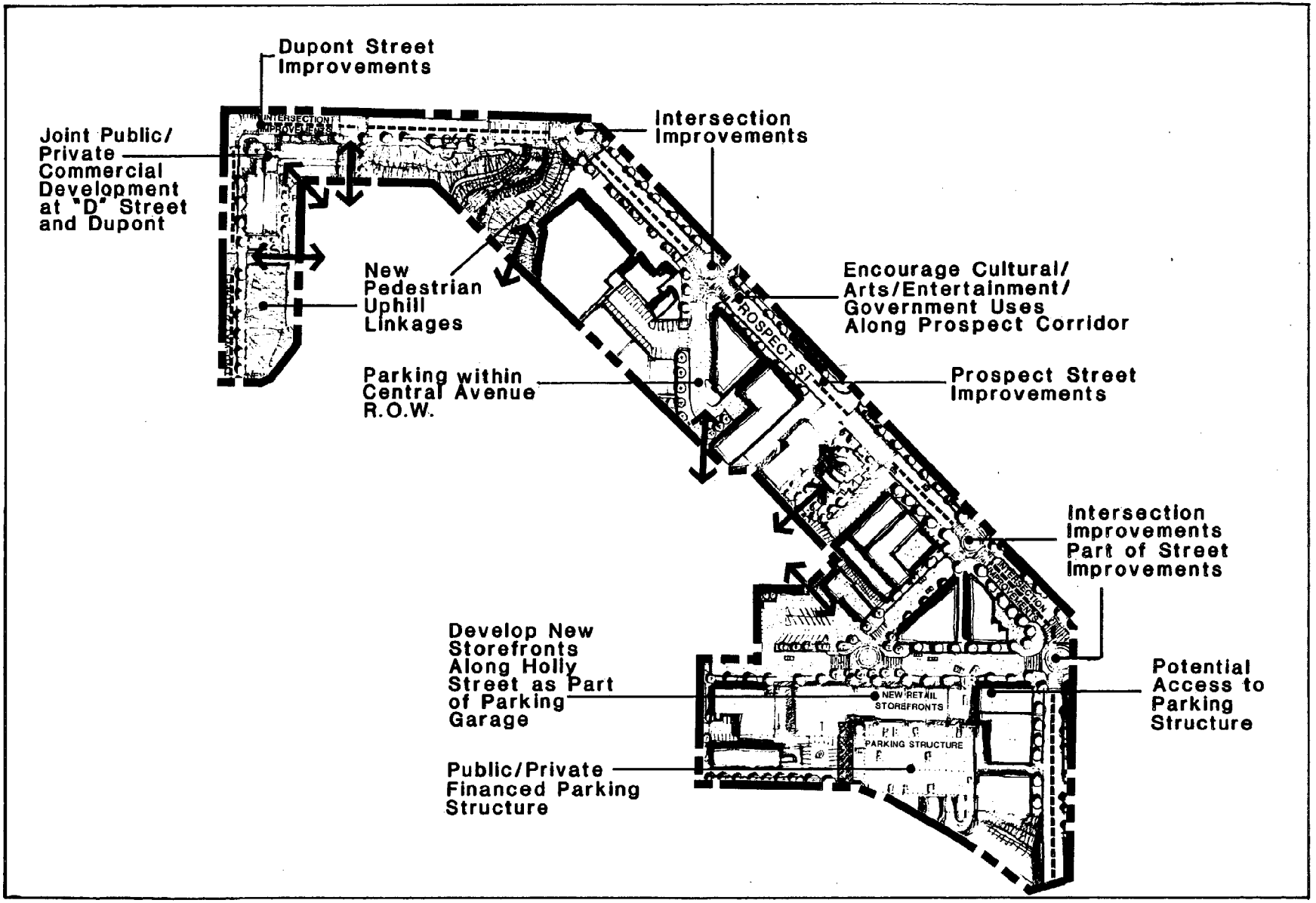
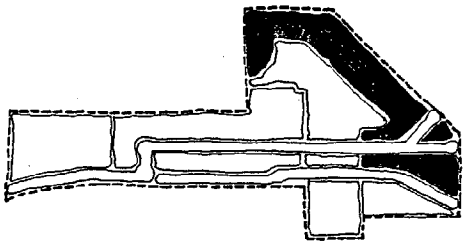


Figure 22

Opportunity Area C: Hilltop/CBD Transition

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA C
Hilltop/CBD Transition



The land uses will complement Whatcom Creek activity and improve the upland/CBD connections. Joint public/private uses could occur with office/commercial/restaurant project at Dupont and "D" Streets, retail infill along Holly, and a parking structure adjacent to the Chestnut/ Roeder realignment.

The uphill uses along Prospect and Dupont should recognize the museum's visual and functional prominence. They should also, in their design and orientation, focus on the Maritime Heritage Center and creek area. Cultural/entertainment uses along with governmental and CBD uses should be encouraged. Scale of development comparable to existing structures is acceptable with greater "people intensities" desirable. Street edges along Holly and Champion should be defined by structures to create a "funnel" gateway into the Central Waterfront.

The hilltop area is important in its creation of linkages with the park and upland downtown areas. Highly visible pedestrian routes should be a part of improvement projects. The intent is to maximize people access opportunities to make the park an easily used urban resource and amenity.

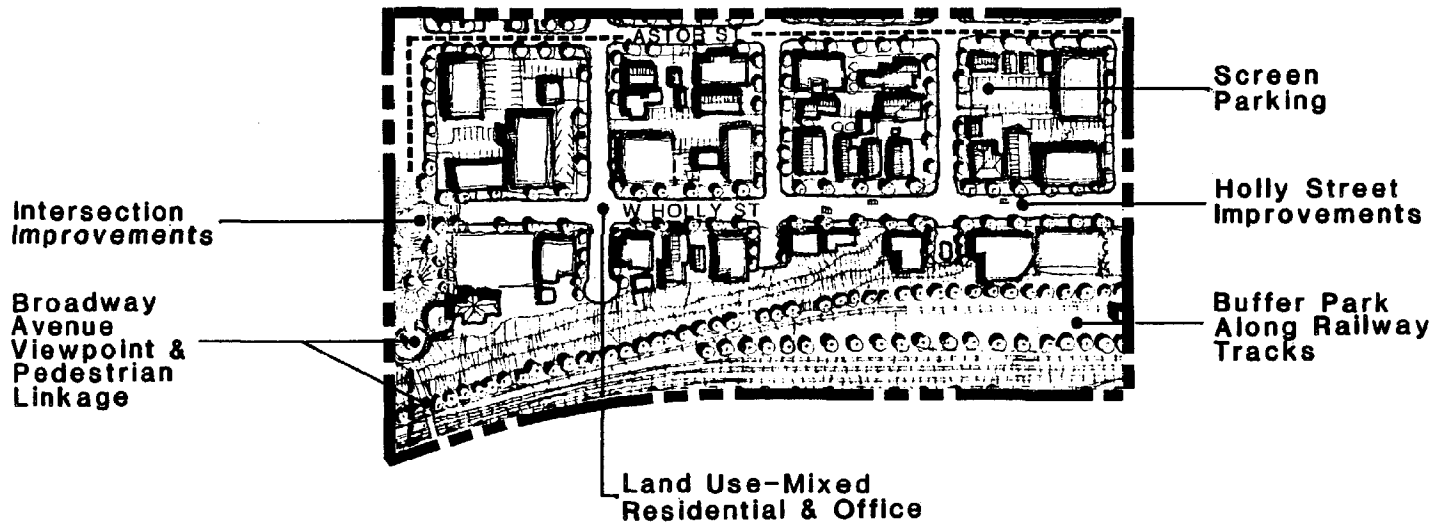


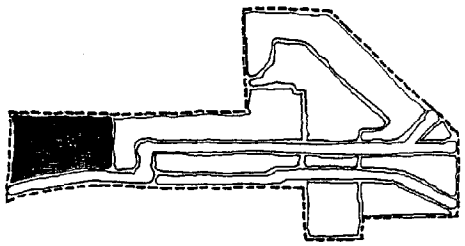
Figure 23

Opportunity Area D: "Old Town" Fringe

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA D

Old Town Fringe



The present pattern of a mix of single/multi-family residential, commercial/retail uses should continue. Opportunities to buffer uphill uses from railroad impacts should be taken along with potentials for expanded water views. A public viewpoint and possible pedestrian linkage at the Broadway street end is desirable. No change is suggested to the scale and intensity of uses.

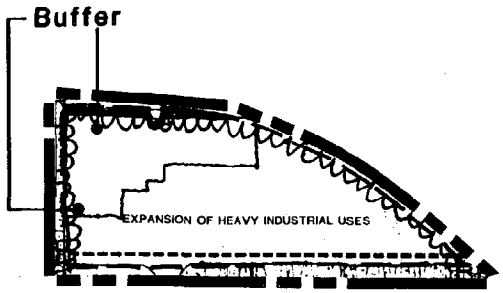
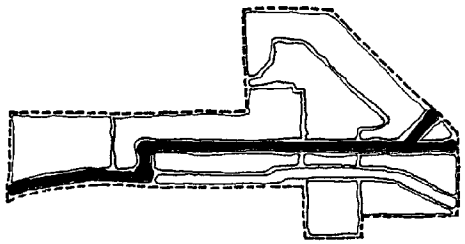


Figure 24

Opportunity Area E: Industrial Expansion Area

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA F
Holly/Roeder Street
Corridor Linkage



This route is intended to continue as a public right-of-way allowing through traffic movement. Streetscape enhancement will be supportive of the adjoining land uses. This opportunity area is detailed in the following Circulation Systems section.

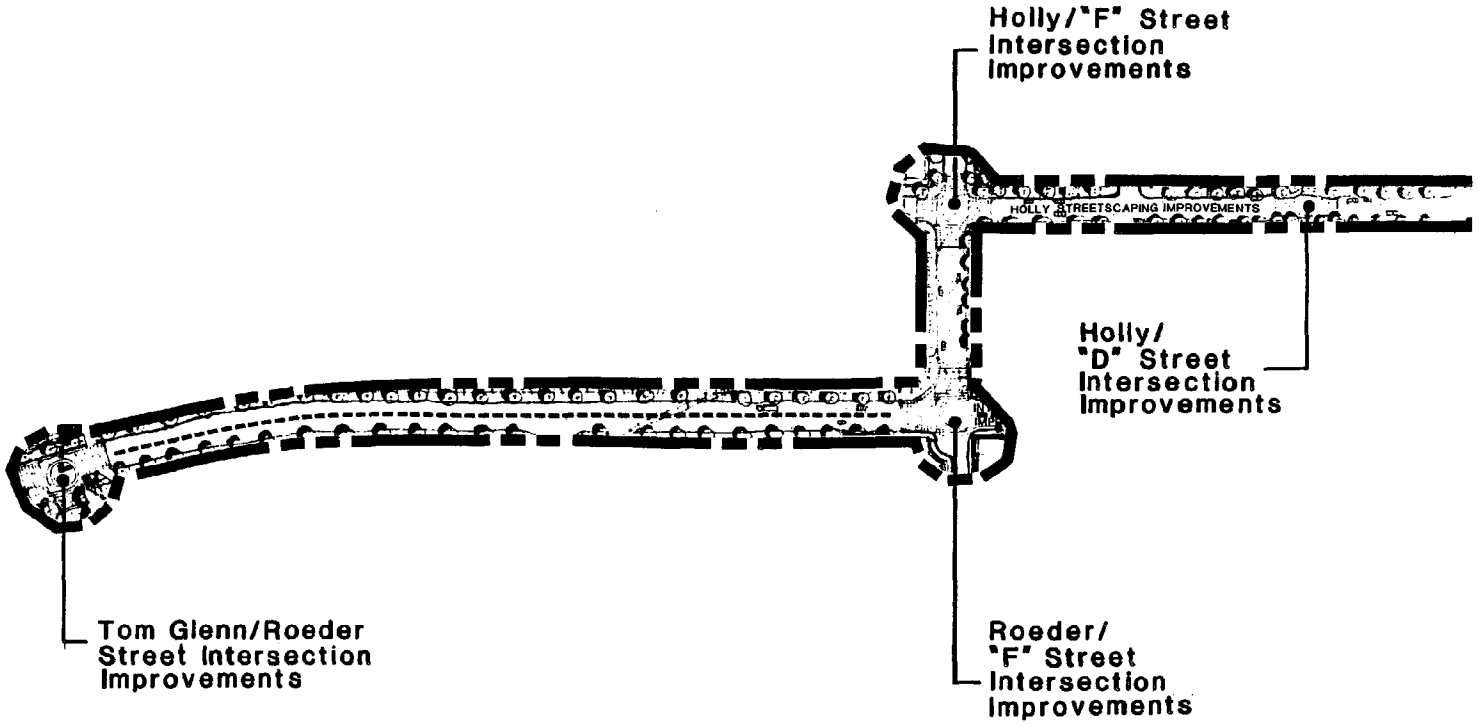
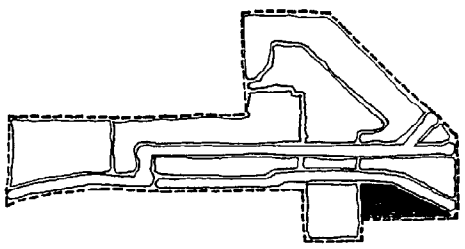


Figure 25

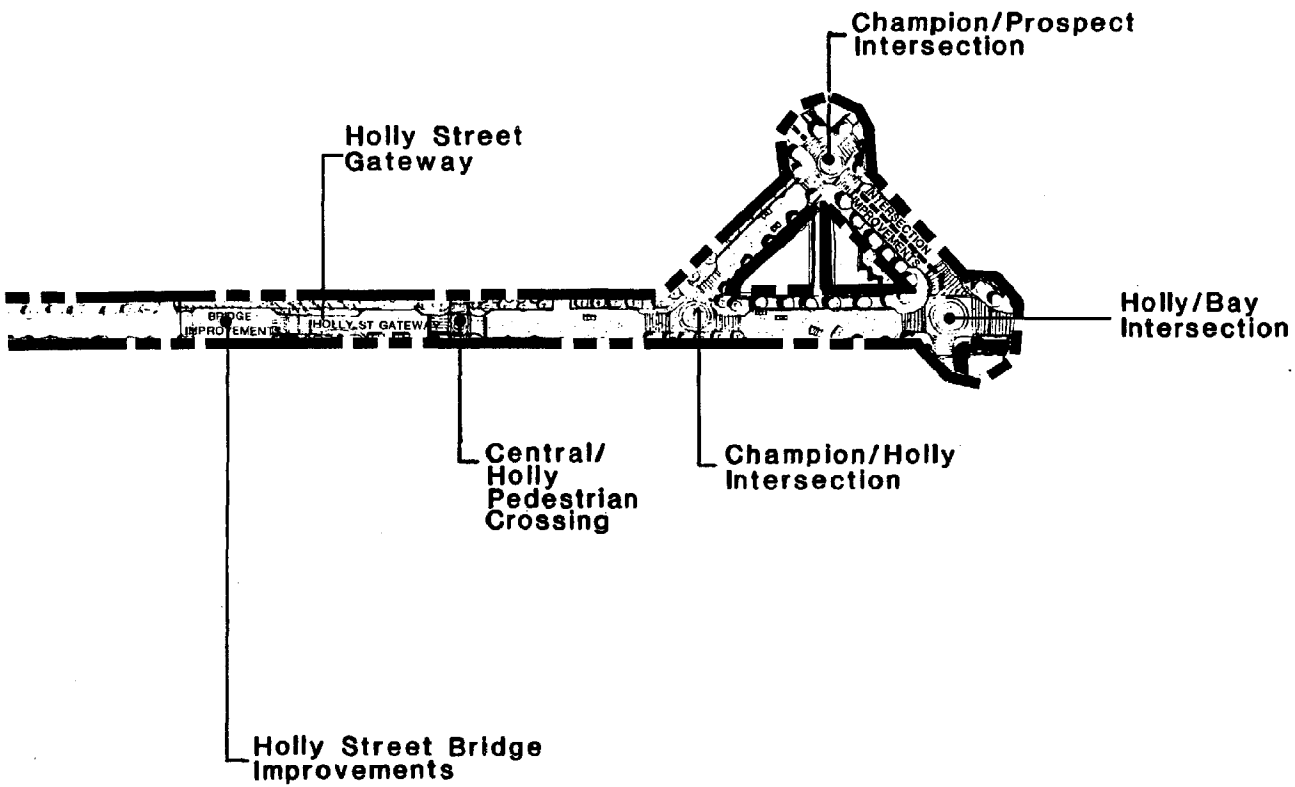
Opportunity Area F: Holly/Roeder Streets Corridor and Linkage

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA E
Industrial
Expansion Area



The Chestnut/Roeder Street realignment defines an area more appropriately related to heavy industrial use. Land use should be changed to allow industrial (Georgia-Pacific) expansion southwest of the new Roeder alignment. The scale and intensity of industrial activity should be sensitive to its adjacent location to non-industrial uses. A transition should occur to reduce impacts.


Champion/Prospect
Intersection
Holly Street
Gateway
Holly/Bay
Intersection
Central/
Holly
Pedestrian
Crossing
Champion/Holly
Intersection
Holly Street Bridge
Improvements

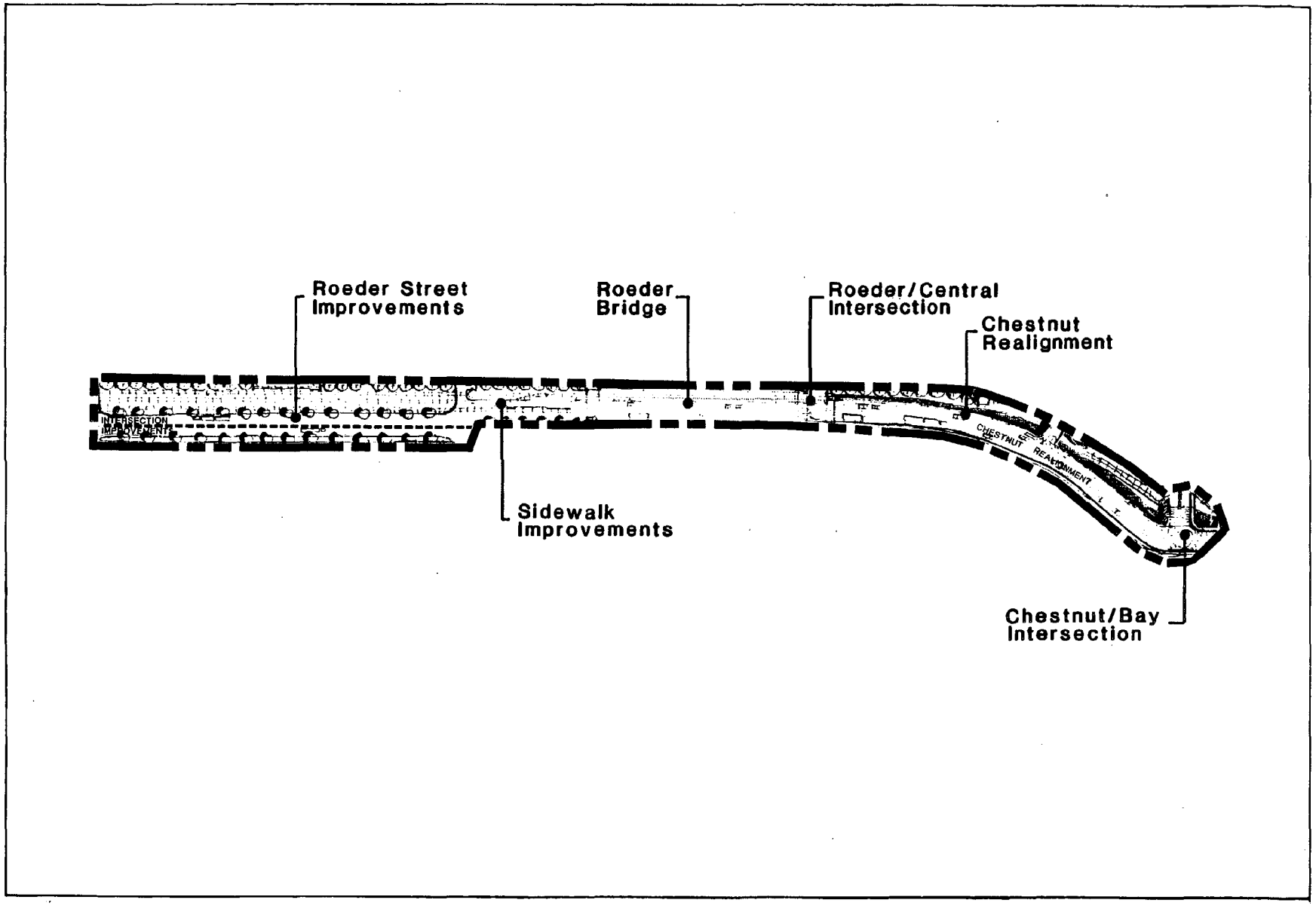
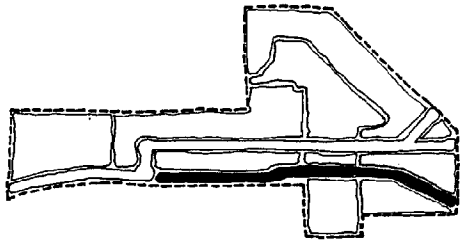


Figure 26

Opportunity Area G: Roeder/Chestnut Streets Realignment

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

OPPORTUNITY AREA G
Roeder/Chestnut
Street Realignment



Roeder, with its realignment, will also continue to be a public right of way allowing through traffic. The functional emphasis will be as a truck route. Adjoining land uses will be less pedestrian oriented and more industrial in nature. Roeder Street standards should be similar to those of Roeder adjacent to Squalicum Harbor, including traffic lanes wide enough to accommodate bicycle lanes, and a sidewalk separated by a planting strip along the waterside of the road. This opportunity area is detailed in the following Circulation Systems subsection.

Circulation Systems

Vehicular Movement

Safe, free-flowing traffic is desired throughout the Central Waterfront. Applicable City engineering standards are all expected to be met in any system changes. Vehicular circulation improvements primarily affect three routes: "D" Street, Holly/Roeder/"F" Streets, and Roeder Avenue/Chestnut Street.

The improvements to "D" Street are intended to allow two-way traffic flow, the main ingress/egress to the Maritime Heritage Center, on-street parking including bus loading/zones and sidewalks. Standard City street sections are applicable. The general standard of improvement is depicted in Figure 27.

The Holly/Roeder/"F" corridor is intended to allow direct traffic movement between downtown and Squalicum Harbor and create visual interest along the route. Continuity throughout the route will be established by signage, street trees, and consistency in adjoining building development. The standard street section is shown in Figure 28. Other repetitive improvements will create a unified district with highlighted special places. Typical key instersection streetscape improvements are shown in Figure 29. The turning transitions at "F" Street must clearly and safely direct traffic movement. At the same time, non-turning movement must continue to be allowed.

The Roeder/Chestnut realignment will improve overall circulation and is detailed by City Engineering Department specifications. Since not only trucks will use the route, related improvements (sidewalks, signage, lighting, etc.) should be considered. A 30-foot curb-to-curb street section is currently planned with no on-street parking between Bay and Central. A sidewalk along the waterside is recommended. The existing Roeder Bridge should allow a vehicle pull-out and viewpoint where Citizens Dock is now located. The route will primarily serve industry-related truck traffic but will also be sensitive to other users.

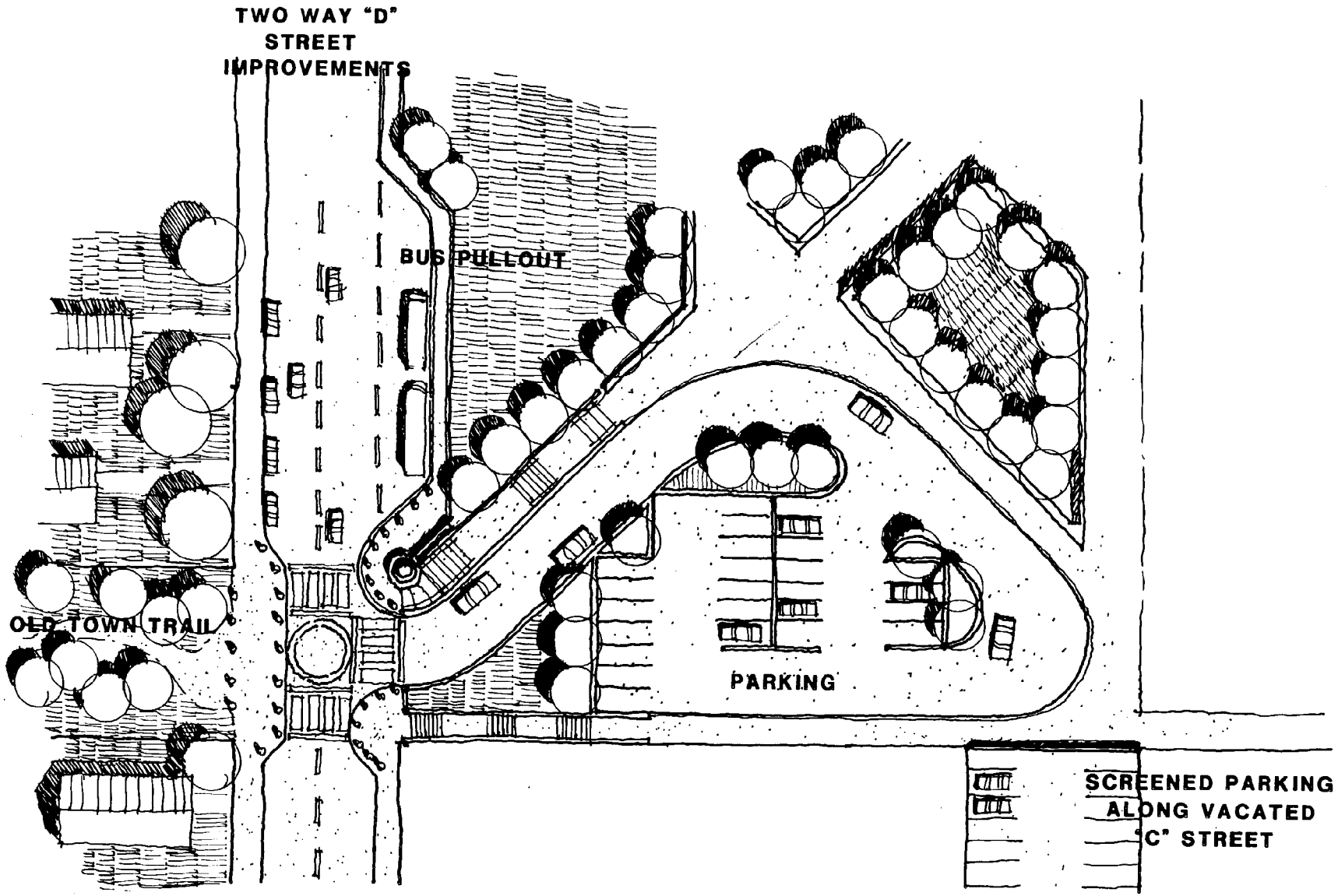


Figure 27

New Entrance to Salmon Life Cycle Facility at 'D' Street

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

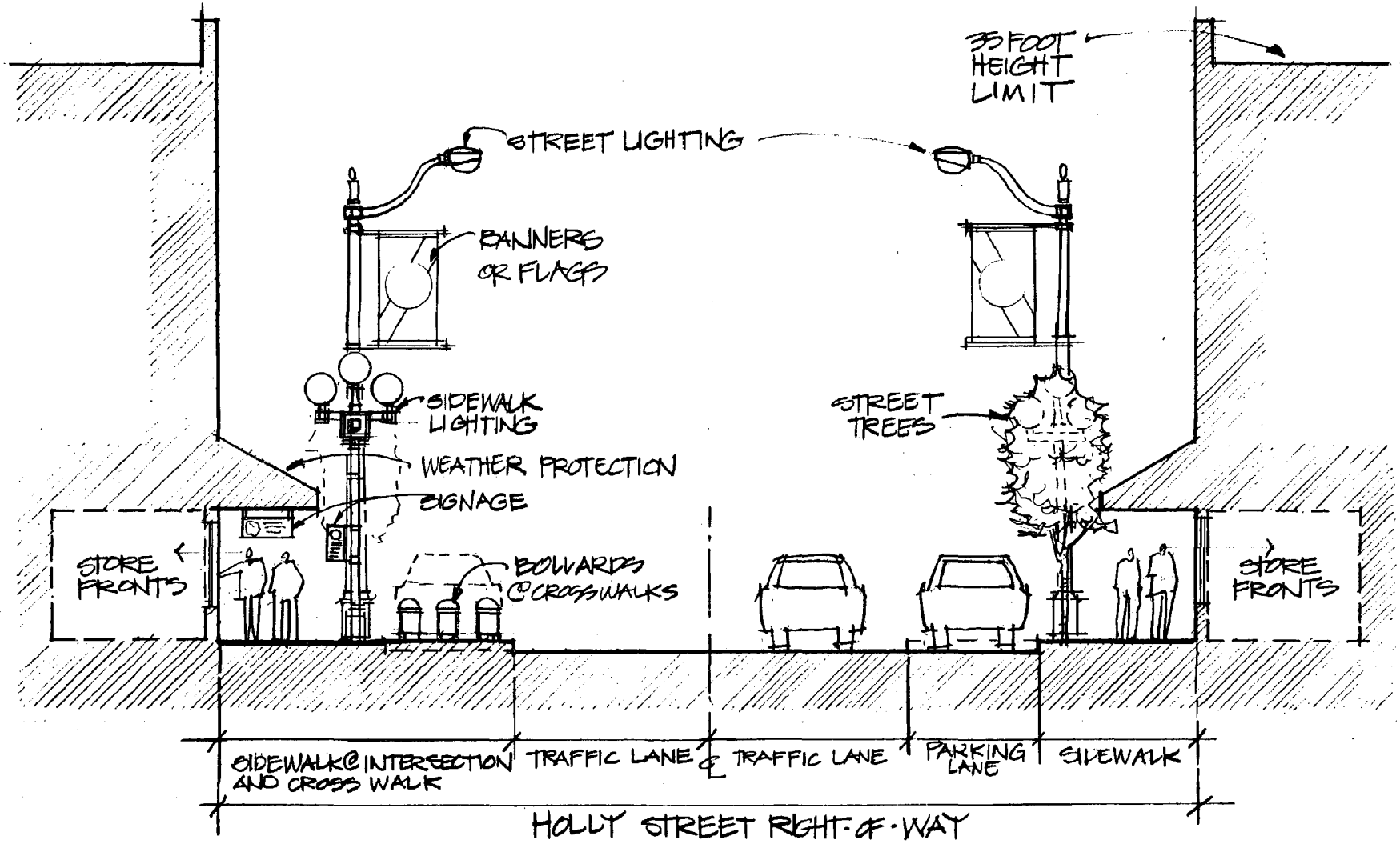


Figure 28

Typical Intersection

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

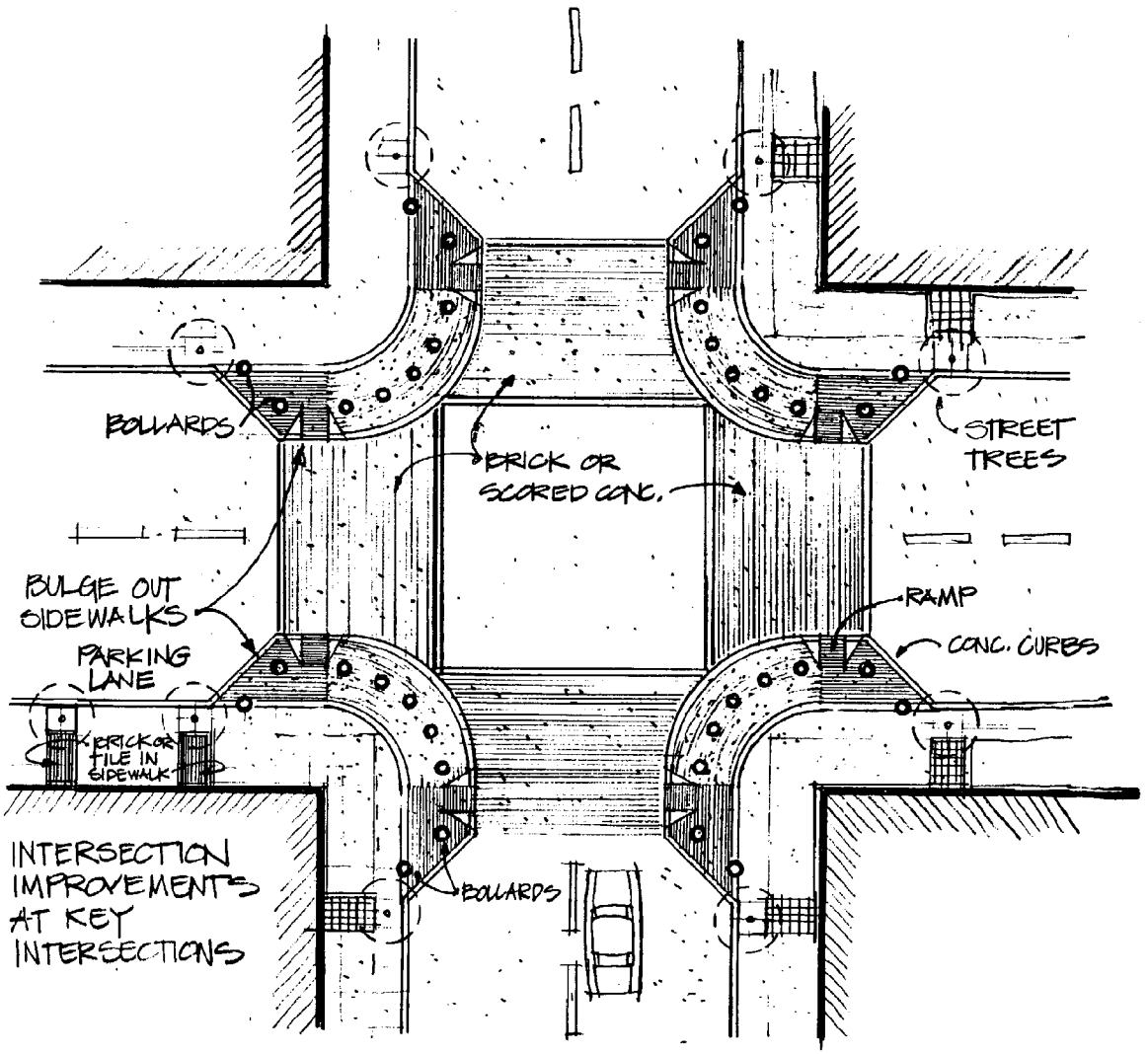


Figure 29
Typical Key Intersection Improvements

Pedestrian Movement

It is intended that standard sidewalks be provided along with street improvements. Typical sidewalk improvements are shown in the preceding Figure 29.

Special pedestrian systems are suggested in the park/Maritime Heritage Center area including the boardwalk linkage from Holly to the Maritime Heritage Center, Maritime Heritage Center/park upland connections, and the Holly Street Bridge and Central Avenue water access improvements. Figures 30 - 33 depict the intended characteristics of these pedestrian improvements.

Pedestrian amenities will be accommodated with traffic (sidewalk/ streetscape) and in separate facilities. The intent is to encourage people activity, safety, and allow easy movement.

Waterborne/Others

The visitors' moorage within the Whatcom Waterway is expected to be maintained. Seaplane activity will continue. Marine industry waterborne use (barges, tugs, etc.) will increase within the waterway. No other significant changes are envisioned for water-related traffic.

Public transit service occurs along Holly Street. Provision for turnouts, signage, and transit shelters (as budgets permit) should be accommodated.

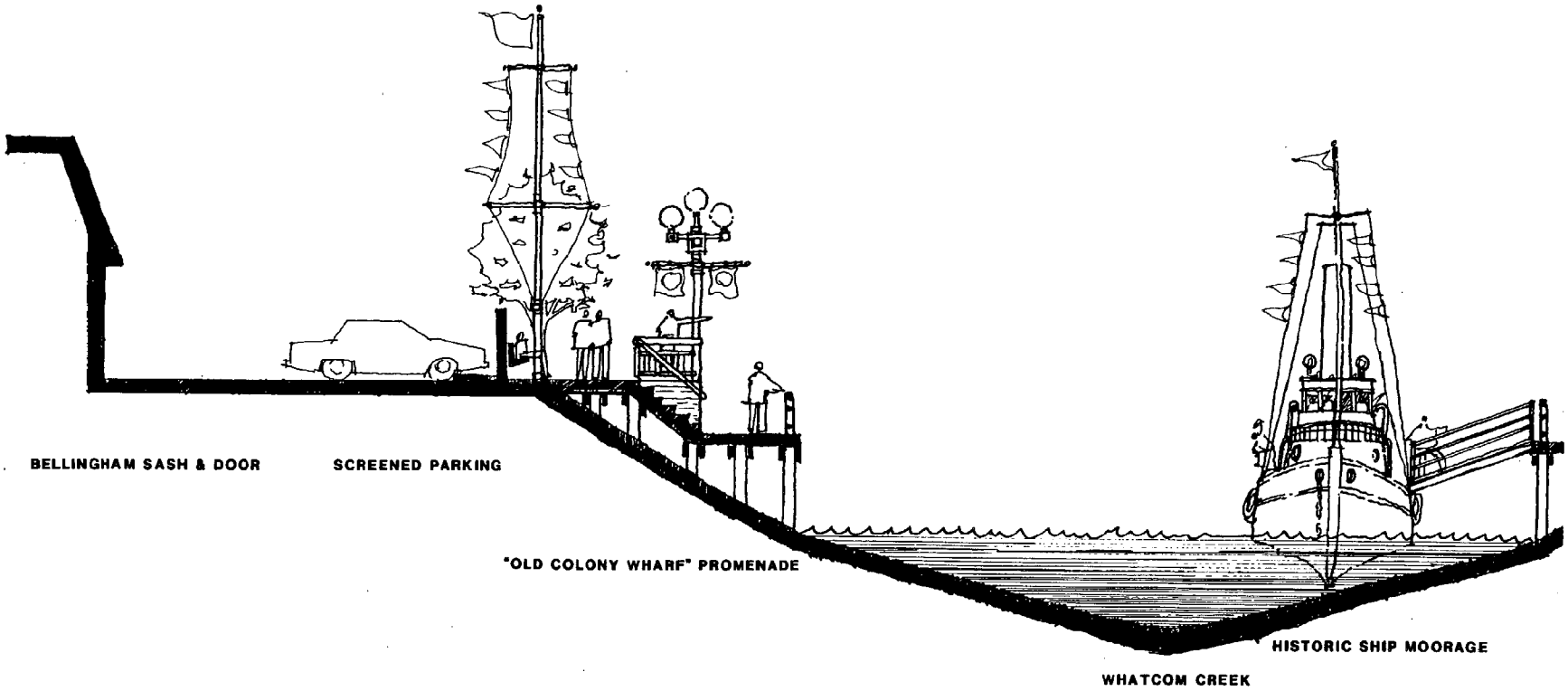
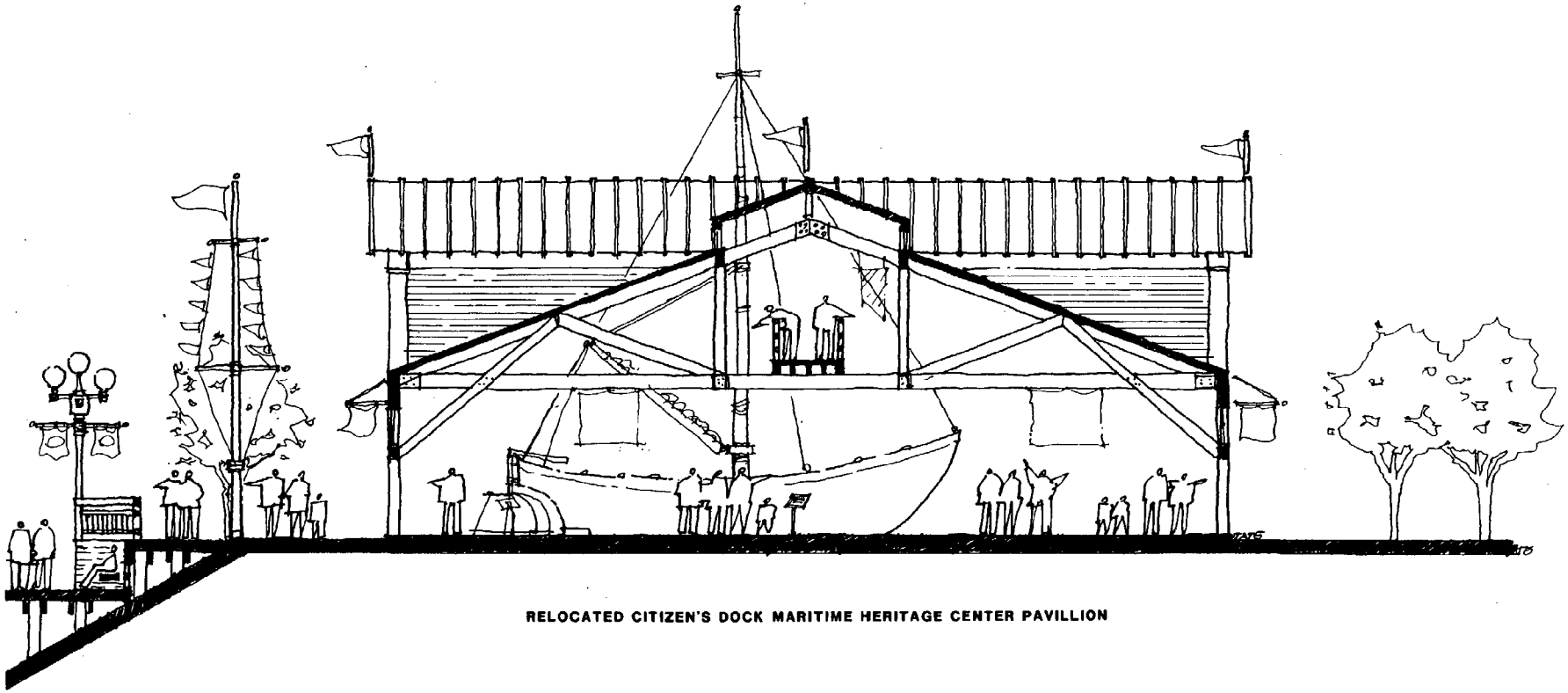


Figure 30

Section at Whatcom Creek Maritime Heritage Center and Pedestrian Promenade

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group



RELOCATED CITIZEN'S DOCK MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER PAVILLION

BOARDWALK PROMENADE

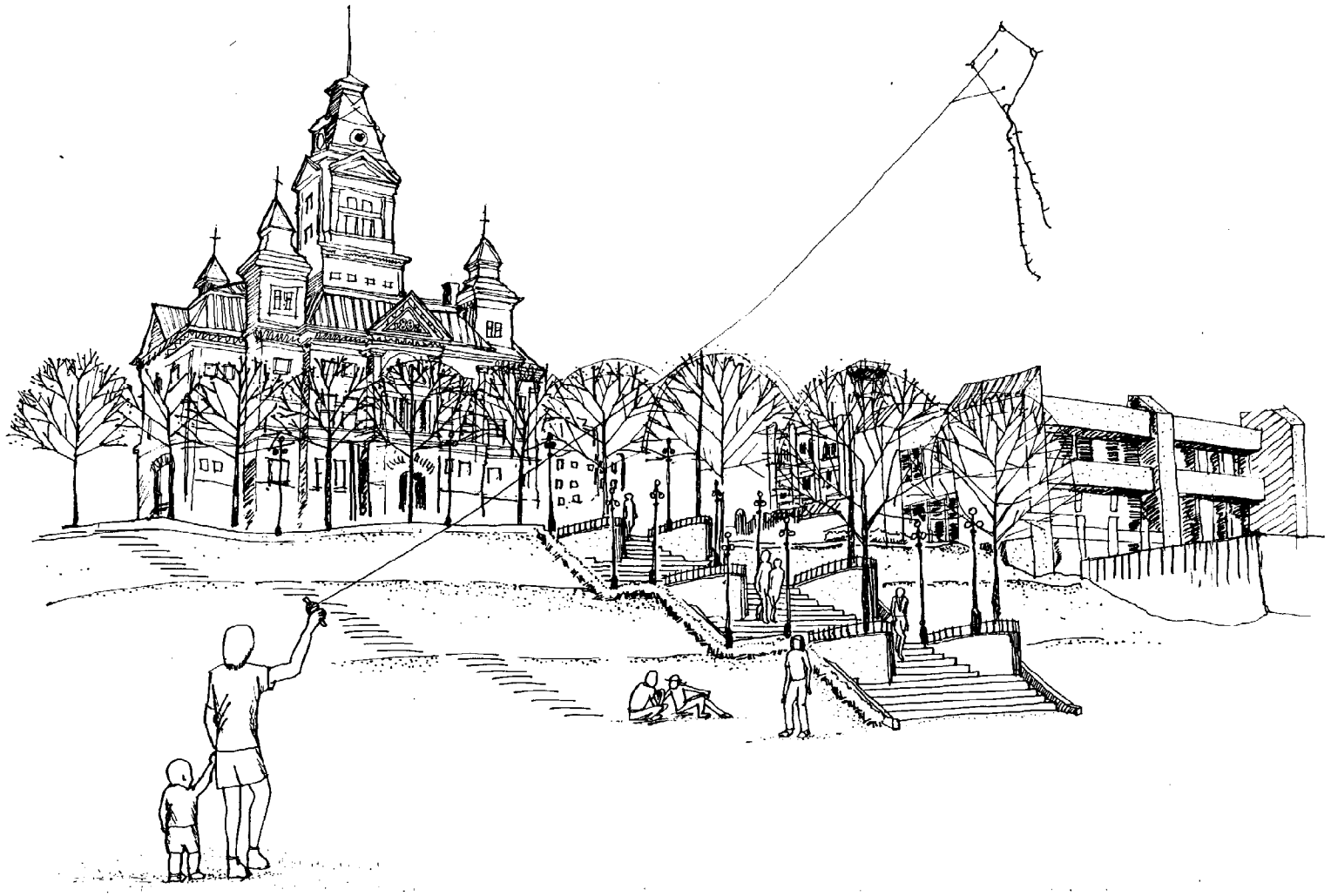


Figure 31

View Toward Museum - Pedestrian Hillclimb

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 32

View Toward Museum - Pedestrian Connection Within Park

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

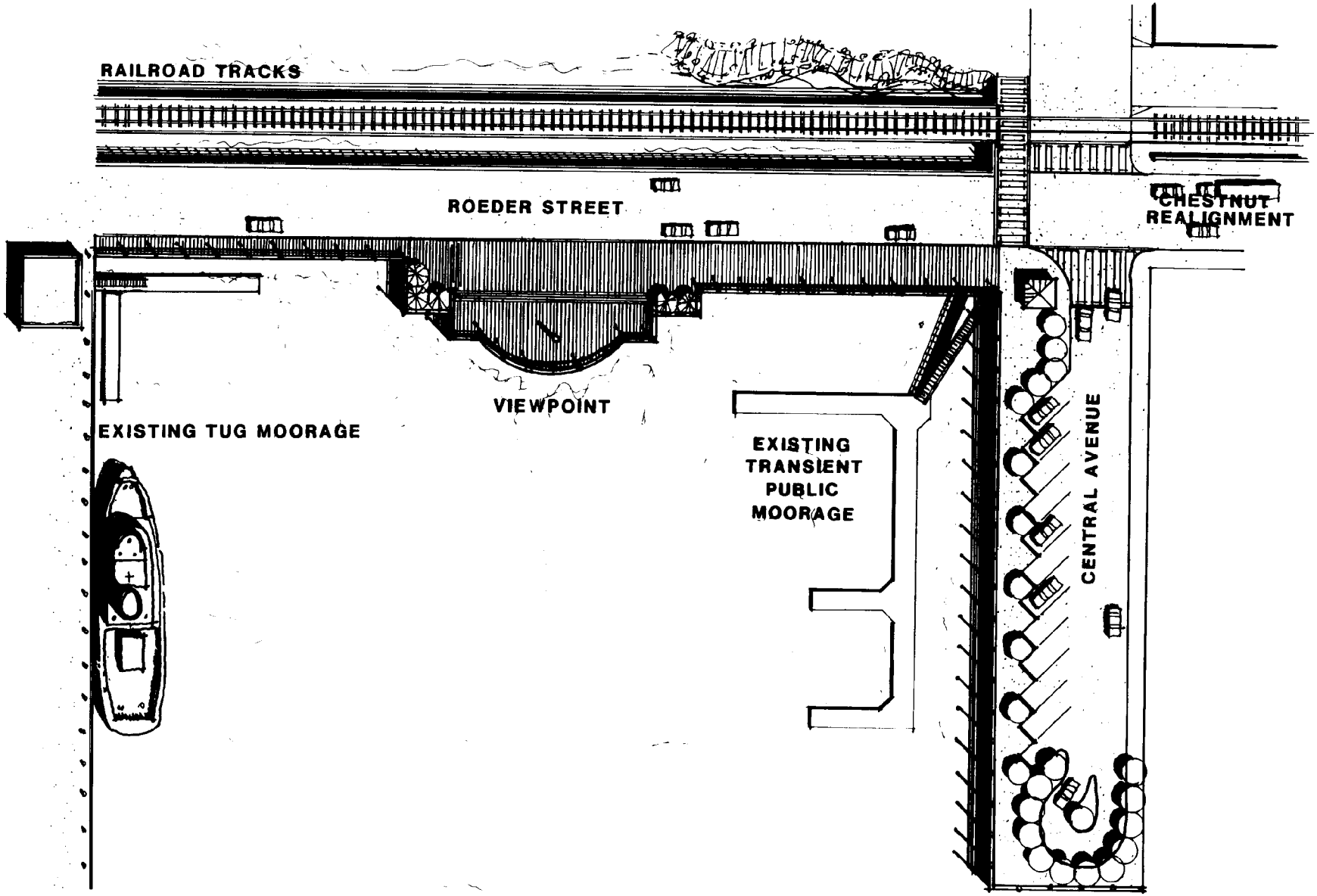


Figure 33

Whatcom Creek Waterway Viewpoint & Central Avenue Public Access and Parking

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Parking

Off-street parking should be provided on-site to serve the uses that create the demand. Potential joint use or shared parking should reduce the overall parking quantity and discourage small, dispersed lots. No parking should be located along Holly Street. The parking to serve uses in this corridor should be located to the rear of buildings.

All parking should be screened and landscaped. Access/egress should minimize vehicular and pedestrian disruption. Curb cuts for driveways should be as few as possible per block.

Public parking should be provided within the park to serve all of the public/recreational functions. As the area intensifies with development, the feasibility of a joint public/private parking structure (between Holly and the Roeder realignment) should be investigated. Parking should clearly be a secondary support use to the principal uses of the Central Waterfront.

Landscaping

Native urban tolerant species of plant materials should be installed. City standards for street trees should be followed for overall consistency. Individual landscaping plans should be developed with building projects, as well as park improvements, and reviewed by the City for overall quality. The landscaping system should include a lush natural park setting with appropriately screened buildings and parking and the Holly/"F"/Roeder street-tree corridor.

Signage and Lighting

Directional Signs

A coordinated and consistent system of signage and lighting is recommended for traffic control/guidance and pedestrian orientation. Route markers should highlight the Holly/"F"/Roeder movement. The path system through the park should continue to be clearly highlighted.

Identification Signs

A common Old Town design theme should be installed to identify public places. Signage should be integrated into buildings and structures.

Advertising Signs

No off-premise advertising should be allowed, including billboards. A balance should be sought between clutter and sterility with a wider vocabulary than now exists. Awnings, show windows, painting schemes, and "product" display signs should enrich the area. Signs should be flush with building facades.

Lighting

The primary purpose of lighting should be for safety through improved visibility. The Old Town theme can be enhanced in lighting such as with the use of closely spaced globe fixtures along the Holly Street Bridge and along this street corridor. Lighting should demark routes and paths and contribute to a sense of vitality. At the same time, excessive lighting should be discouraged to avoid nighttime impacts on residential uses.

Utilities

Basic infrastructure needs and systems will be served in accordance with City standards. It is recommended that an undergrounding program be implemented along the Holly Street corridor. A significantly different visual condition can be created with undergrounding (Figures 34 and 35).

Figure 34

Existing View Along Holly Street

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 35

View Along Holly Street with Streetscaping Improvements

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Architectural Design

The architectural character desired should be sensitively derived from a northwest historic Old Town theme. It should not be imitative. Wood/ timber and industrial metal materials are suggested. An enlivened color scheme (e.g. Granville Island) should be considered to celebrate the mix of industrial and other uses. Quality should reflect functional needs. Flexibility and durability are more important than glamour and prestige.

Historic preservation is of high priority. The remaining structures of recognized value should be preserved to the extent possible. The train depot is a particularly important structure given its architectural character and prominent location. Historically significant buildings are inventoried in Section III.

The historic flavor should be reflected in new building designs. For example, roof lines, fenestration, siding, scale, and other detailing should be consistent with and improve upon existing building character.

Theme: "Old Town"

The architectural scale and character of the Central Waterfront should reflect that established early in the history of the area when it was known as Whatcom. This was the site of the original settlement that was later to become Bellingham. The early settlement was a mix of uses which shared the narrow beachfront and clung to the bluff overlooking Bellingham Bay and Whatcom Creek. Many of the early structures were built on pilings or tressels over the water along the creek or on the beachfront due to the topography of the area. The "Old Town" grew rapidly and its architecture reflected the straightforward utilitarian and functional requirements of a frontier town.

Initially the forest provided settlers with the basic timber building materials, however, brick, stone and terra cotta were later used. In more recent times, corrugated metal siding and roofing has been used on industrial buildings. Architectural styles were typical of the mid-1800's West Coast pioneer towns which borrowed from New England maritime and classical revival styles. Commercial and residential buildings were one to three stories in height, and reflected the 25-, 50-, and 100-foot platting of their lots. Commercial buildings typically covered 100% of their lots and came right up to the property line. Street facades were uniform in frontage although cornices, marquees and awnings projected out over the sidewalk.

Symmetry was the basic geometrical format for most of the old building facades. Repetition of window bays and roof lines were the dominate rhythm. As is practical in the wet climate, roofs were usually of a high pitched gable or hipped type with 4-in-12 to 6-in-12 pitches, although some sloping flat roofs did exist. Most notably the original Whatcom Territorial Court House on "E" Street, which was the first brick building in the northwest, originally had a flat roof.

Longer facades had recessed doorways and parapet details to mark entrances to building. Facade proportions reflected the long, narrow, deep lots and party wall construction in their vertical building facades. Pilasters, columns and windows were employed to compose the facade together visually in the vertical dimension. Structural elements are carried down to the street level while upper portions are supported by lintels spanning the entrances and storefronts below. The ground floors were typically higher to accommodate commercial/retail uses. Many one-story buildings used false fronts to give them the appearance of having a second story and to provide space for signage.

The necessity for operable type sash windows for natural ventilation resulted in smaller window openings which are subdivided vertically. Street level storefronts employed larger glass openings with entrances inset to provide visual emphasis, weather protection and lend architectural depth.

Siding on the early pioneer wood frame buildings was either horizontal or vertical 1x6 clapboards or drop siding with a wide V-joint exposed. Corner boards, windows and doors are usually plain 1x6 fir boards. Windows were double-hung with two or four glass panes in each sash. New metal sided buildings should be encouraged to reflect this horizontal or vertical rhythm.

Later masonry residential and commercial buildings were done in Richardsonian Romanesque, or the Chicago commercial styles with brick, terra cotta or stone. Details included heavy rusticated facades with round-arched windows and entrances and ornamental cornices. The Whatcom County Museum is a fine example of this.

Signage

Historically, signs were painted directly on to the facades of the buildings or hung from beneath marquees over the sidewalks. Raised letters or painted signs were used. Signs should enhance architectural detail and not obscure building features. No off-premise signs should be permitted. Awning signs are permitted as long as they do not detract from the historical character.

Awnings and Marquees

Awings and marquees provide weather protection for pedestrians and should be continuous along Holly Street. Awnings shape and color should contribute to the architectural theme of Old Town. Awnings can be operable and folded up during dry weather or at night. Marquees can employ glass skylight especially on the north sides of buildings to allow more light to the sidewalk.

Street Furniture

The use of benches and moveable chairs and tables is encouraged throughout the area. A uniform and integrated system of kiosks, telephone booths, water fountains, newstands, bicycle stands and public signage should be developed for the area in keeping with the "Old Town" theme and the mix of industrial and retail activities.

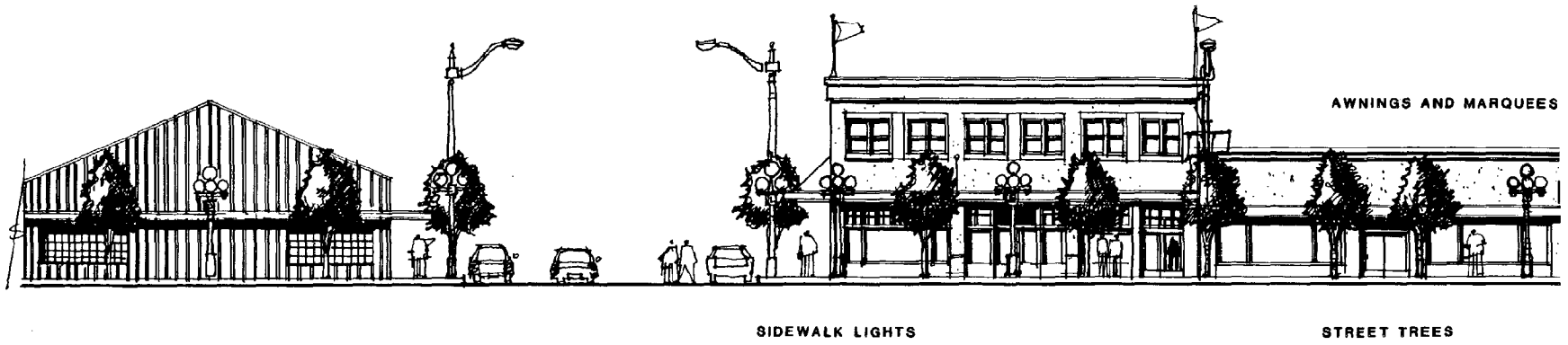


Figure 36

"Old Town" Scale and Character

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CONTINUOUS BUILDING FRONTAGES ALONG HOLLY STREET

BULGED OUT CURBS AT CROSSWALKS

BOLLARDS

STREET LIGHTS

District Edges/Influence Area

The Central Waterfront Target Area is optimistically viewed as the integral balance among the Government Center, CBD, Squalicum Harbor, Georgia-Pacific, and the Lettered Streets Neighborhood. The different requriements and demands of each of these portions of the Influence Area must be satisfied. Thus, Central Waterfront edges should not be defined in hard physical terms but should accommodate the give and take necessary for compatibility. Old Town distinctiveness and the Maritime Heritage Center/park as a special place can still be created. The area will remain a crossroad among the adjoining centers.

Uphill linkages to the CBD and Government Center should be strengthened through new uses and developments. Access to the Maritime Heritage Center and awareness of this amenity should be improved. This uphill area should also strengthen the downtown and government uses along with the emerging cultural/entertainment activities.

Squalicum Harbor accessibility will be improved with the Central Waterfront improvements. Compatibility with the heavy industrial activities of Georgia-Pacific will also be maintained.

Continued joint involvement of all the key interests will be critical to maintaining consensus in implementing the plan.

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

The third ingredient of the Central Waterfront Development plan is 17 specific actions/development projects to implement the concept. Included are land use/development, circulation/parking projects and Bellingham Plan/zoning actions as follows:

Land Use/ Development Projects

1. Citizens Dock relocation and rehabilitation
2. Public waterfront access
3. Maritime Interpretive Center
4. Public/private development projects
5. Consolidated development area
6. Heavy industrial expansion

Circulation/ Parking Projects

7. Holly/Roeder streetscape
8. Holly St. Bridge and Gateway
9. Intersection improvements
10. Chestnut/Roeder realignment
11. "D" Street improvements
12. Upland pedestrian linkages
13. Parking

Bellingham Plan/ Zoning Actions

14. Lettered Streets Area 10
15. Lettered Streets Area 11
16. Lettered Streets New Area 14
17. CBD Area 15

Figure 37 shows the general location of the improvement projects. Following is a more detailed description of each individual action, the phasing and priority of its development and an estimated budget. All costs are in 1986 dollars and include construction costs, fees, taxes, permits and contingencies. Costs relating to street widening includes costs for the improved areas only and do not include resurfacing of entire roadways. Further detailed capital cost information can be found in the Appendix.

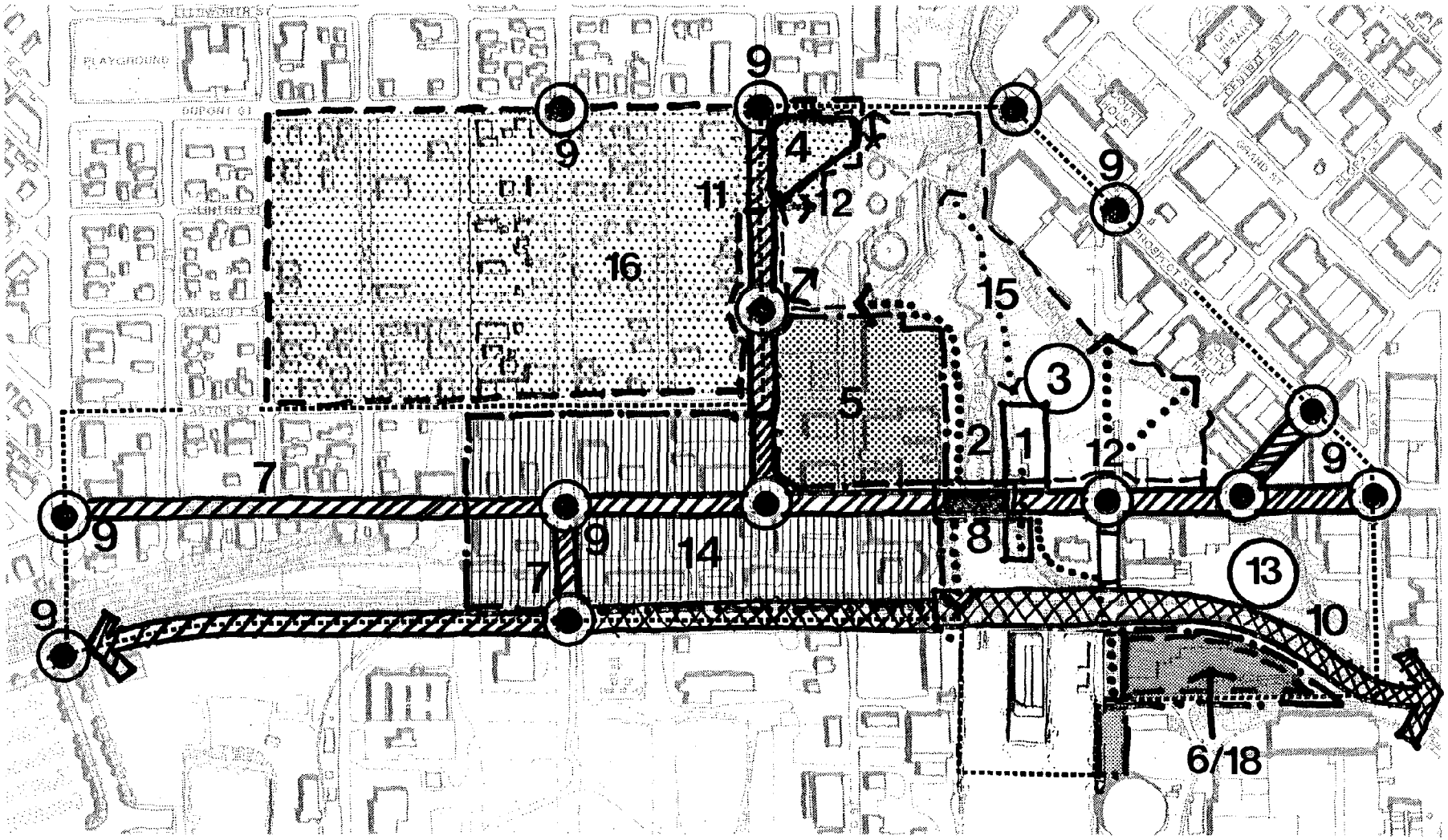

Figure 37

Improvement Projects

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

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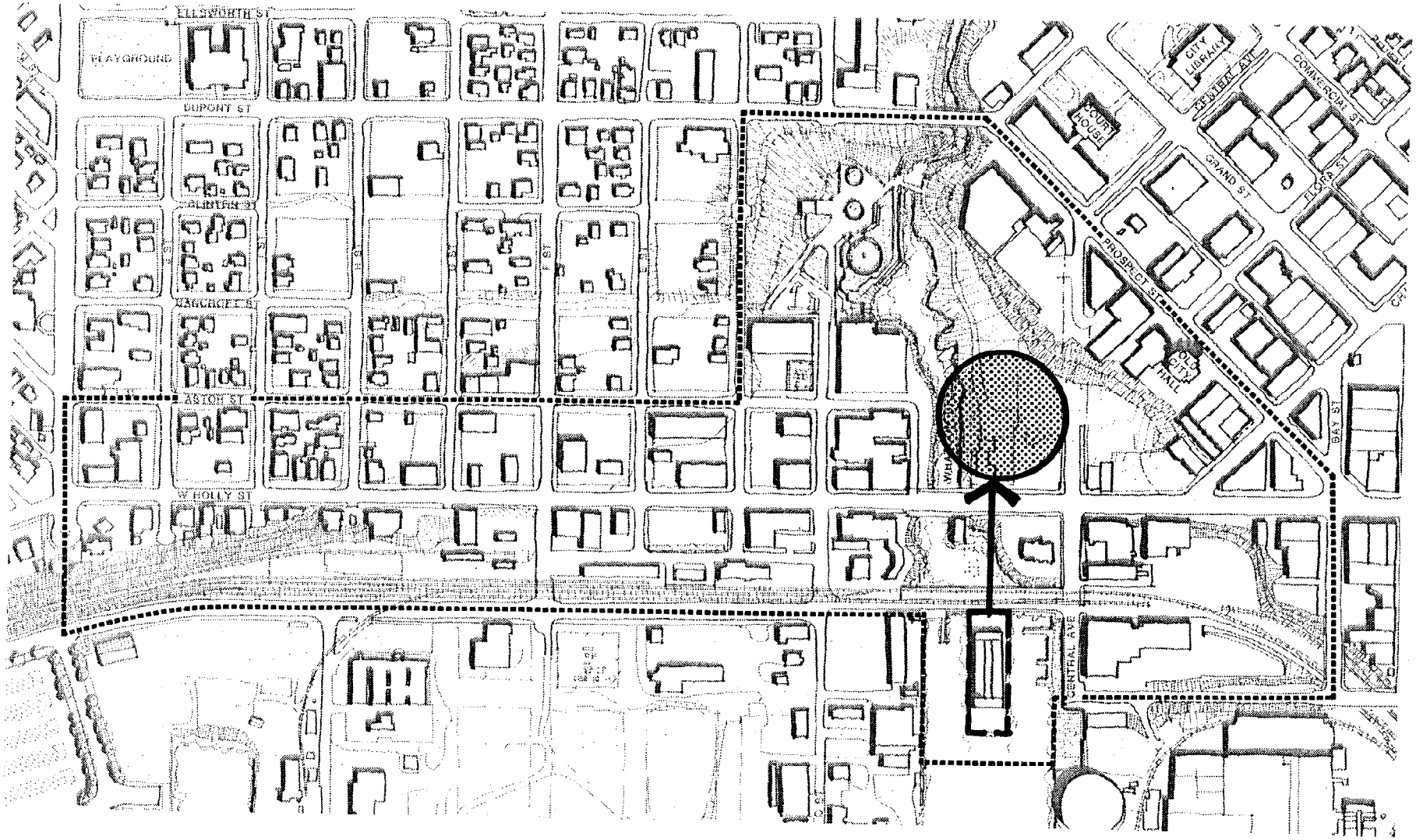


Figure 38

Improvement Project 1: Citizens Dock Relocation and Rehabilitation

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 1

CITIZENS DOCK RELOCATION
AND REHABILITATION

Description

Partial reconstruction of Citizens Dock within the City Park would involve its removal from the waterway and salvage/reassembly of major structural elements. A reduction in the building's scale will likely be necessary with renovation as a roofed but open air pavilion. The portion of the structure now fronting along Roeder Avenue could be recreated and located along Holly Street. The intent is to concentrate people activities north of Holly, free-up the waterway for marine industry, retain a historical flavor and improve visual/public access to the water.

The rehabilitated, partially reconstructed structure at its new location is to be reminiscent of the historic building. A design is recommended that recreates the two ends of the existing building sited to suggest the original structure's footprint but without constructing the central building element. Up to two covered bays with open walls exposing the structure would be sufficient to create a pavilion. The "end buildings" could include interpretive displays, rest rooms, office space or specialty retail/food service. A planked deck/boardwalk stepped down toward Whatcom Creek would complement the pavilion, serve pedestrian activity and allow access to the historic ship displays. A blending of the natural, flowing park space into the more urban built environment is necessary to create a transition.

Phasing

The demolition and reconstruction would occur in one phase. A next step would be the actual design and detailing of the project. Additional amenities, interpretive elements/exhibits could occur in the future as financing is available. Priority is high.

Budget

An average $34/square foot basic construction cost is estimated for the demolition and partial rehab of Citizens Dock as an open pavilion and demolition. If about half the existing structure were reconstructed the project cost would be some $517,000 including land purchase.

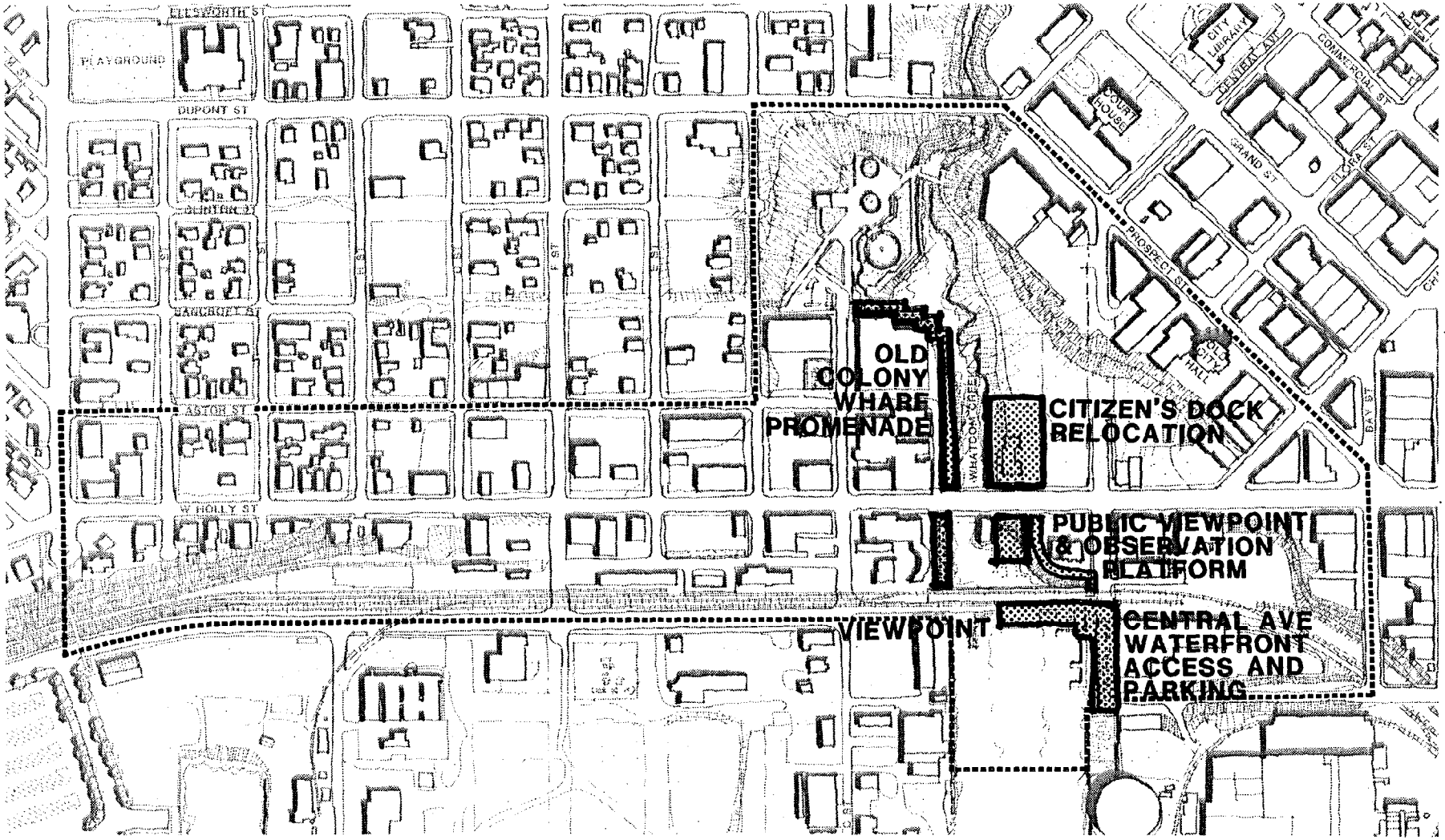


Figure 39

Improvement Project 2: Public Waterfront Access Projects

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 2

PUBLIC WATERFRONT
ACCESS PROJECTS

Description

The Maritime Heritage Center and Park will provide improved public access to Whatcom Creek. Relocation of Citizens Dock (Project #1) will include ground/deck areas for greater linkages with the water north of Holly Street. Since the waterway will now be visually unobstructed, a public viewpoint/observation deck is included between Holly Street and Roeder Avenue. This structure would allow elevated views and explanation of activities in the working waterfront. Public access along both creek banks in this area is desirable.

Access to the public moorage at Central Avenue would continue. Some improvements along the waterway edge with a public walkway are suggested. The remaining portion of the street right-of-way would be used for parking and screening of adjacent private development. A pedestrian boardwalk should extend along the edge of the waterway, above the public moorage. Access to and awareness of this moorage should be improved. The remaining right-of-way area should allow for angle-in parking and vehicular access and turnaround. Complementary landscaping and street furniture would also be provided. It is expected that adequate screening and physical separation occur adjacent to the industrial expansion area. A portion of the Central Avenue right-of-way south of Chestnut coiuld be vacated for private use.

A significant new public promenade along the northwest bank of Whatcom Creek would extend from Holly Street to the Maritime Heritage Center. This project recreates the alignment and character of the historic Old Colony Wharf. A boardwalk structure extending over the creek bank is envisioned. The design should have a nautical boardwalk character. The structure will extend over the bank along the creek's edge. Period lighting, colorful banners, benches and other pedestrian amenities should all contribute to a unified theme. For example, steel pipe railings along the boardwalk could match those of the Maritime Heritage Center. A zig-zag boardwalk alignment around the creek bend could create viewing niches. This route will connect the Maritime Heritage Center with Holly Street and allow a full loop through the park on both sides of the creek. An alternate route would require a bridge crossing the creek in the vicinity of Sash and Door. This second choice would still allow pedestrian movement to both sides of the creek.

The Old Colony Wharf Promenade project requires private property acquisition/easements and would be implemented in concert with Projects #5 and #11. It would be developed in one phase and is considered moderate priority.

A new public viewpoint would be located at the head of the waterway on Roeder on the former Citizens Dock site. The viewpoint would include a car pullout area with parking. A major public viewpoint/observation platform is proposed adjacent to Holly Street offering views toward the Whatcom Creek Waterway. A heavy timber, nautical character planked deck is suggested with similar design elements to other public improvements. Opportunities for elevated views should be created. Two possibilities are view periscopes or an actual tower.

A second, smaller public viewpoint from Roeder Avenue is located at the head of the Whatcom Creek Waterway. Public access potentials should be captured yet this location should clearly be secondary to the Holly Street platform. The same heavy timber, nautical character is envisioned. It should be connected with the walkway and parking located in the Central Avenue right-of-way.

Phasing

Public access improvements would be completed with the rehabilitation/ relocation of Citizens Dock (Project #1). Priority is high.

The public viewpoints Central Avenue access improvements are critical projects and are also considered of high priority.

Budget

The project cost magnitude for the boardwalk and related amenities is estimated at about $634,000.

A budget amount of approximately $435,000 is estimated for pedestrian improvements associated with Citizens Dock site work.

The public viewpoint/observation platform is envisoned to cost about $254,000. Improvements to Central Avenue public access and the Roeder Avenue viewpoint may amount to $380,000 and $325,000, respectively.

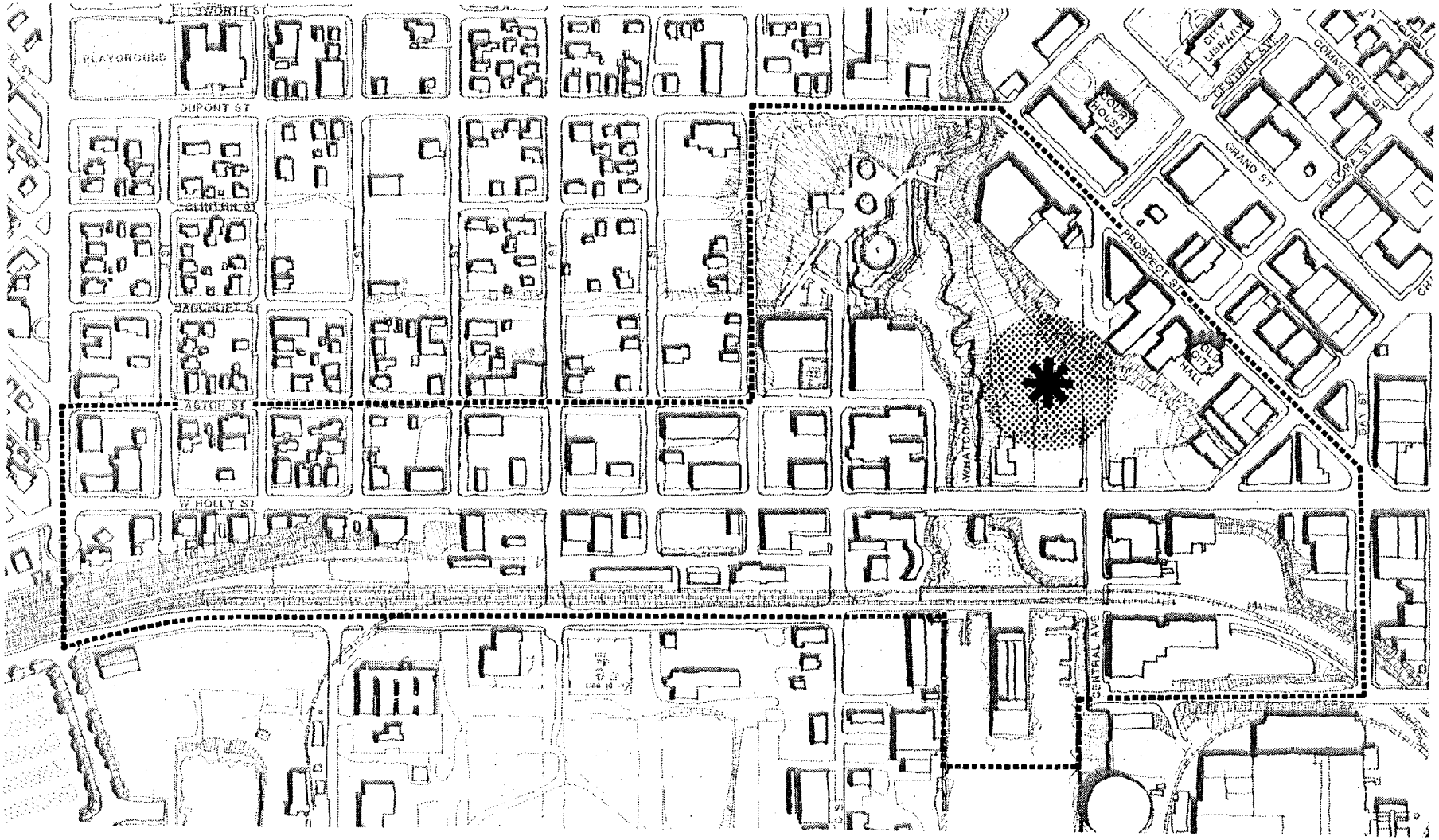


Figure 40

Improvement Project 3: Maritime Interpretive Center

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 3

MARITIME
INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Description

A "hands on" display of Indian culture, historic fishing and timber industry and local Old Town traditions will be developed within the park. Lower cost/maintenance elements should be preferred. Old fishing boats, an Indian village or other recreated or original artifacts along with informative displays are envisioned. It is suggested that the interpretive center exhibits be integrated with the rehabilitated Citizens Dock.

Phasing

Staged development consistent with an overall plan or continually changing exhibits will likely occur. Development is of moderate priority and is dependent on funding and resource availability.

Budget

No specific cost can be defined. The range could be from donated "old fishing boats" and labor/materials to a more elaborate project.

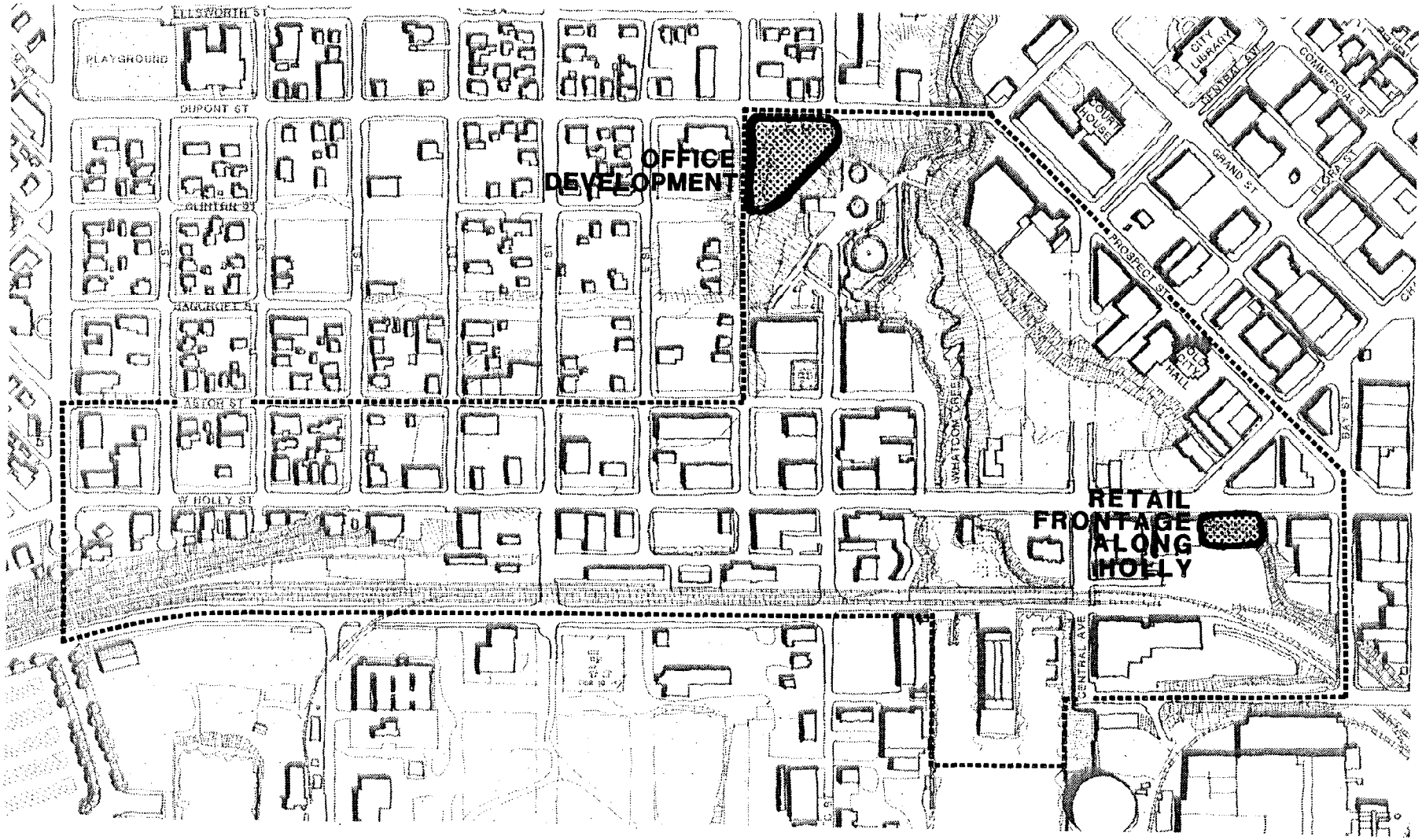


Figure 41

Improvement Project 4: Public/Private Development Projects

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 4

PUBLIC/PRIVATE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Description

Two joint public/private building projects are defined, both involving ground lease or sale of public property to stimulate local investment (please refer to market analysis). An office development (12,000 gsf) is suggested at the corner of Dupont and "D" Streets which may include retail/restaurant space.

The second project involves infill of commercial/retail space (12,000 gsf) along Holly Street. Continuous building frontage obscuring unattractive views and increased street level pedestrian activity would result.

Together the two projects create a north/south tension and anchors to the park. Care must be given to the longer-term project maintenance and its enhancement of the park.

Phasing

Timing is dependent on market conditions, establishing a public/private partnership and preparing development plans. Action should be of high priority to the City to demonstrate confidence and commitment to the area.

Budget

Construction costs could vary considerably depending on the project scope. Cost estimates for the proposed commercial spaces assume medium grade finishes and include parking (office space only). Project cost estimates may vary due to material and finishes used but are projected to be in the range of $1,159,000 for the office development and $864,000 for the retail space. The public/private costs and benefits are not yet detailed.

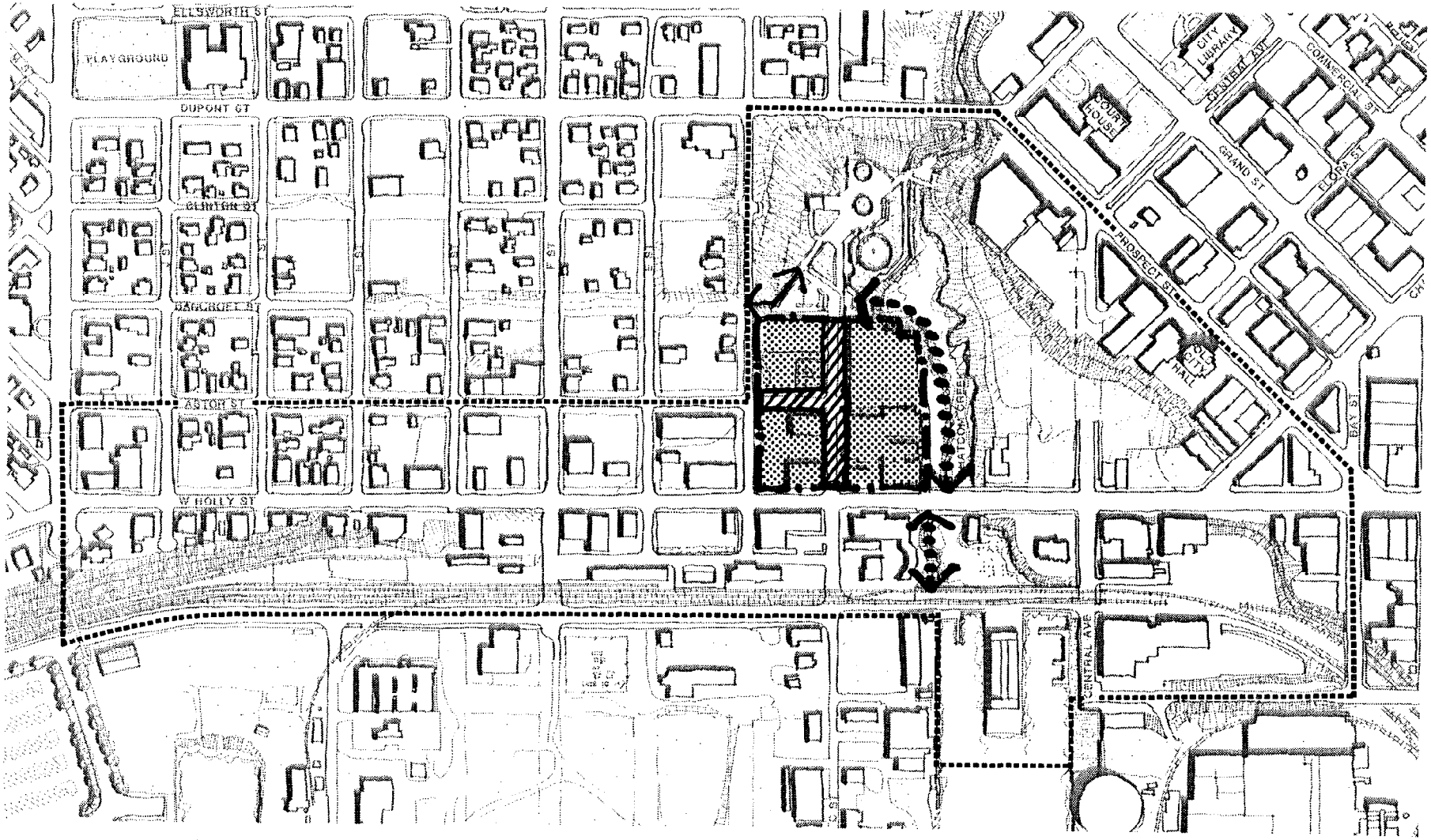


Figure 42

Improvement Project 5: Consolidated Development Area

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 5

CONSOLIDATED
DEVELOPMENT AREA

Description

The four-block area bordered by Bancroft/Holly/D Streets and Whatcom Creek is a central, private improvement area with large property ownerships and established uses. Public street vacation of "C" and Astor Streets for each two-block length for private use is suggested. This action will enhance viability and functioning of current activities and increase flexibility for future changes. Pedestrian/vehicle conflicts and Maritime Heritage Center access/visual approach problems will be mitigated.

Phasing

This project must occur together with Projects #2 and #11 as well as with necessary zoning changes (Actions #14 and #15). A coordinated, one-time step is possible. Priority is considered high.

Budget

No direct cost is expected. However, there will be negotiations with the related public access improvements.

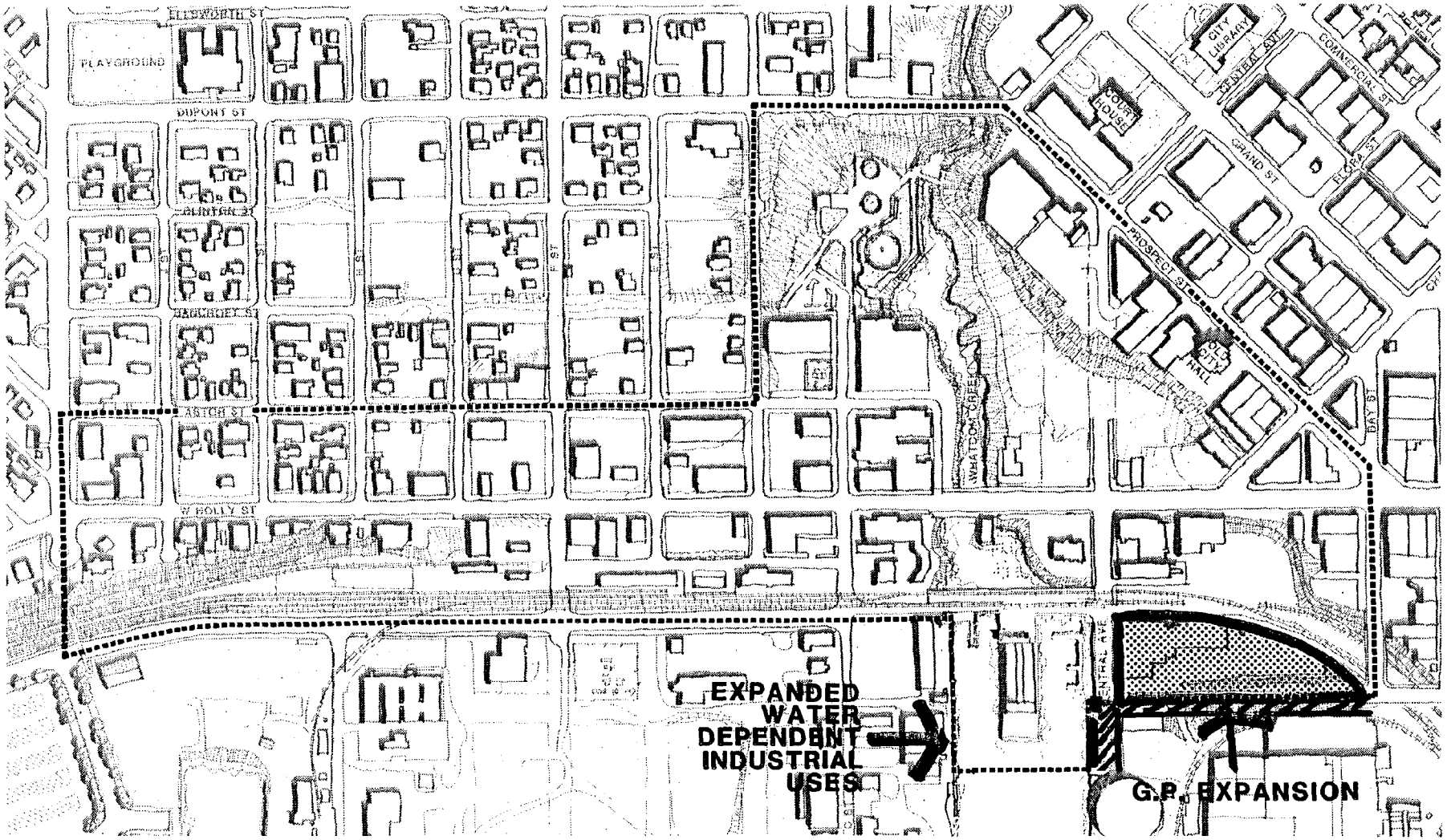


Figure 43

Improvement Project 6: Heavy Industrial Expansion

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 6

HEAVY
INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Description

The Chestnut/Roeder Street realignment project will create new opportunities for heavy industrial expansion that can be appropriately separated and buffered from commercial activities. The area waterside (southwest) of the new street alignment could accommodate industrial use with the exception of the public viewpoint at Roeder and public moorage.

The Chestnut Street and a portion of the Central Avenue right-of-ways may be vacated for private use/development. However, State law requires that "equal or better" shoreline access must be provided. These negotiations are expected to be part of the Roeder/Chestnut realignment project.

Further, the Whatcom Waterway will be "opened-up" for industrial related navigation with the removal of Citizens Dock. Expanded marine activity should occur which will enhance the adjoining property. Barge staging, tugs, and related waterborne traffic should increase. The transient moorage and seaplane activities should remain.

Phasing

Regulatory change should occur with the Chestnut/Roeder Street realignment project. Private development would occur subsequently. Priority is considered high.

Budget

No specific cost is associated with the change. However, negotiated public/private cost sharing with the street realignment costs is required.

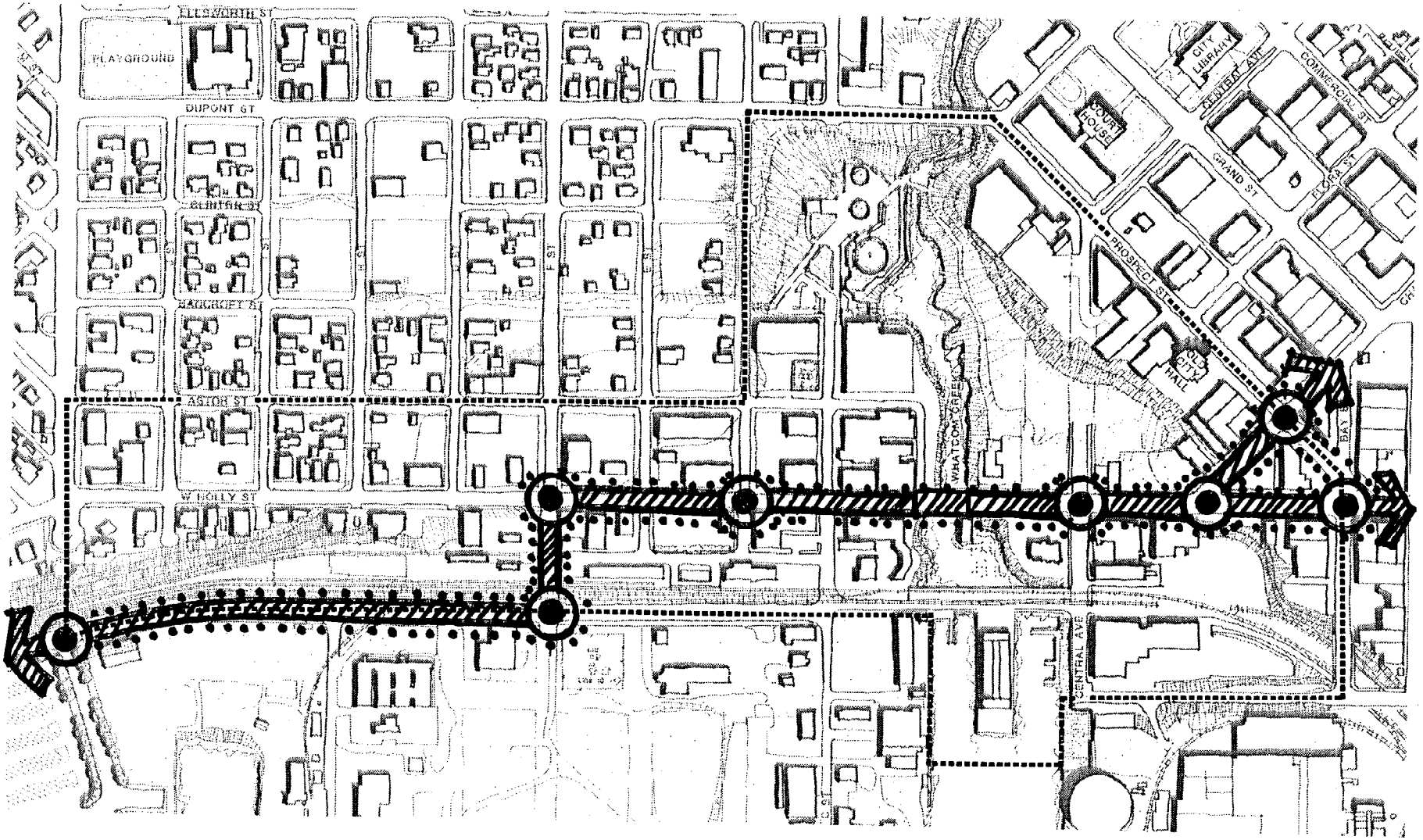


Figure 44

Improvement Project 7: Holly/'F'/Roeder Streetcape Improvements

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 7

HOLLY/"F"/ROEDER
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Description

The intent of the improvements is to strengthen visually and functionally the connection between downtown and Squalicum Harbor through the Central Waterfront. Two-way traffic with on-street parking would continue along with pedestrian amenities (paving, curb bulbs, street trees with grates, coordinated signage and lighting, bollards, underground utilities, etc.). Key intersections would also be highlighted (see Projects #8 and #9). The humanscale element would create a continuity through the corridor. Particular attention must be given to the "F" Street transition to Holly and Roeder including widened curb radii and improvement of the railroad track crossing. Given the potential derived benefit to businesses fronting the corridor, it is conceivable that all or portions of the improvement costs could be borne by the formation of a local improvement district.

Phasing

Highlighted locations (Projects #8 and #9) should occur first. Continuous infill and utility undergrounding are important but could occur in the future depending on successful funding.

Budget

Sidewalk improvements including curbs, brick pavers, trees with iron grates, light standards, benches, planters, drinking fountains, newstands, and litter receptacles interspread along the corridor are estimated to total to an all inclusive streetscape cost of $527,000. This does not include traffic signals, bus shelters, utilities or underground work.

Underground utilities (power and telephone lines) are estimated at $894,000. Additional costs of approximately $12,000 would be associated with smoothing of the roadway over the railroad tracks at Holly and Roeder.

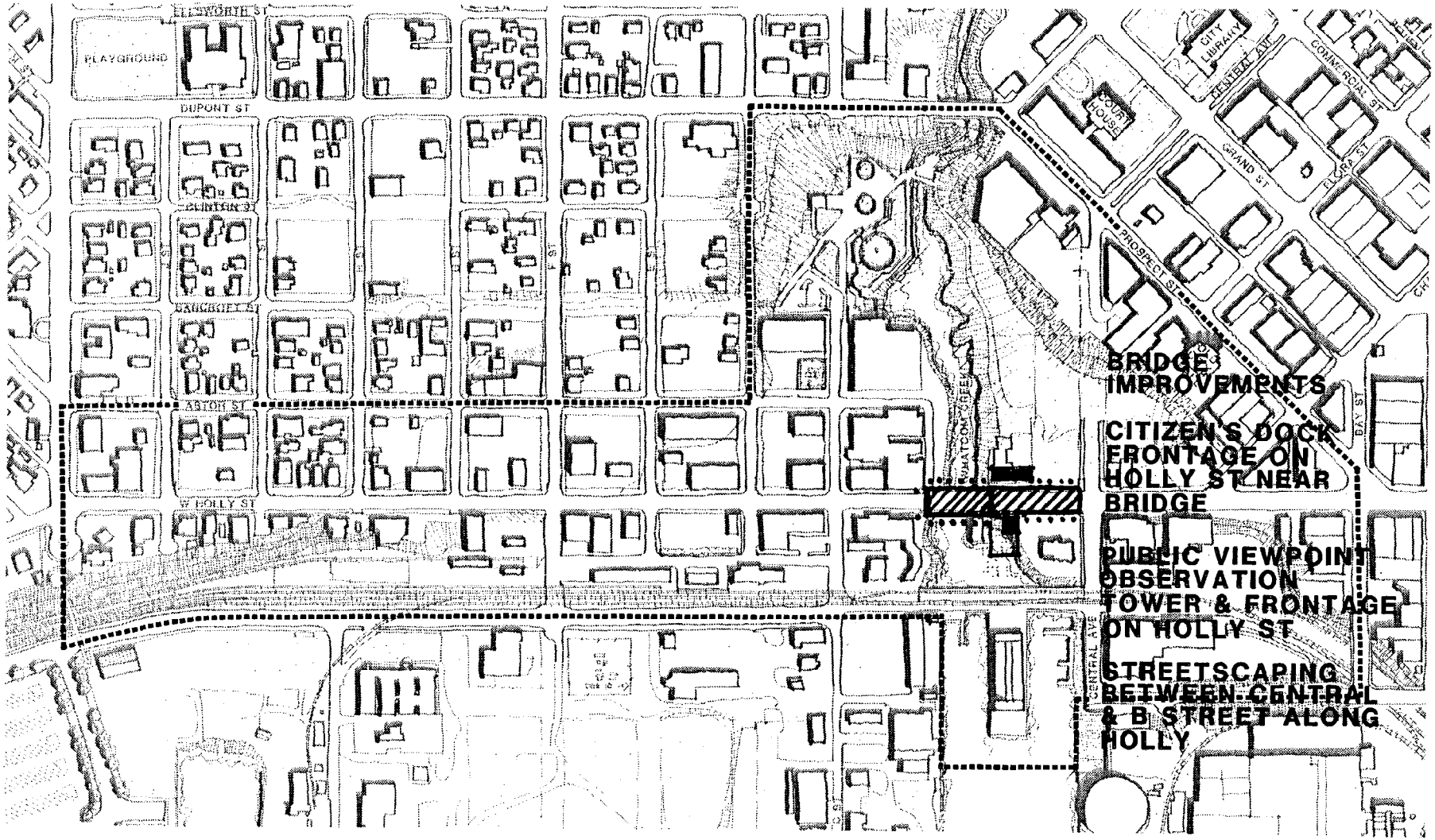


Figure 45

Improvement Project 8: Holly Street Bridge and Gateway Improvements

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 8

HOLLY STREET BRIDGE AND GATEWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Description

A key, visible location to be accented is the Holly Street Bridge over the creek to Central Avenue. The use of banners and closely spaced old style light standards on the bridge will enhance its recognition as an important place. Special paving materials and signage will improve pedestrian street crossing. The adjacent development of the relocated Citizens Dock and view platform will enclose and complement the corridor. Parking and pedestrian access to the Maritime Heritage Center/Park and waterway will be improved. Improvements may also include bollards and park benches.

Phasing

A single development action is preferable and is considered high priority. It must occur in coordination with Projects #1, #2, #5, #7 and #9.

Budget

Total project costs for the bridge and related gateway improvements is estimated at $288,000.

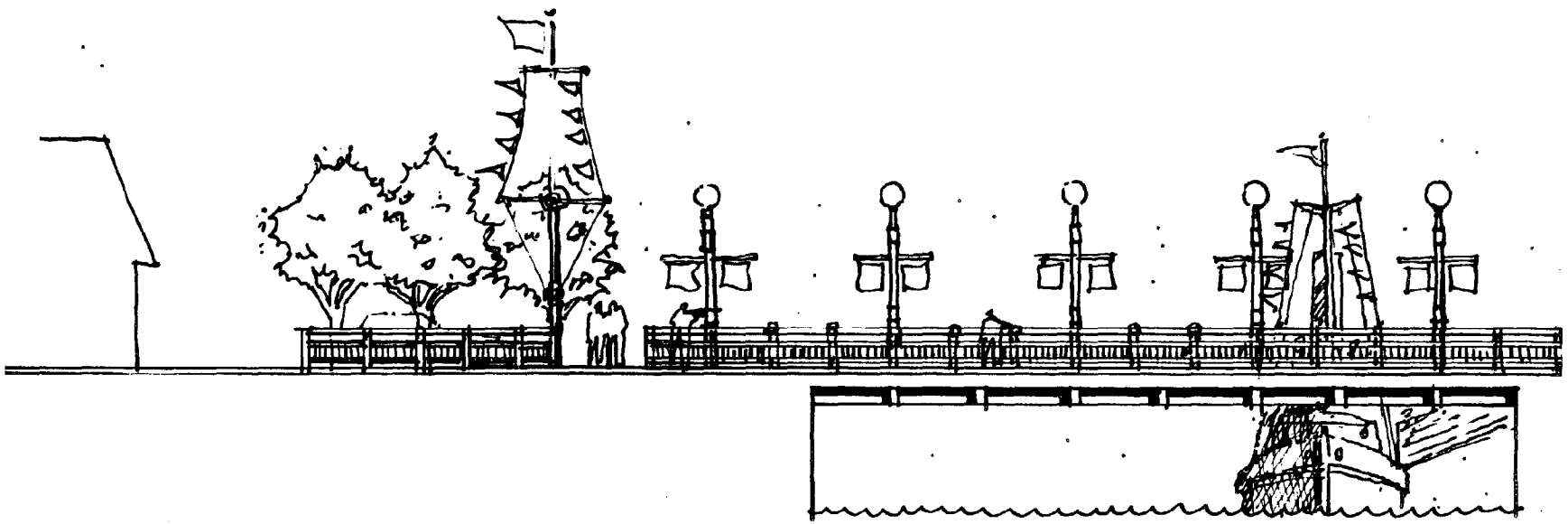
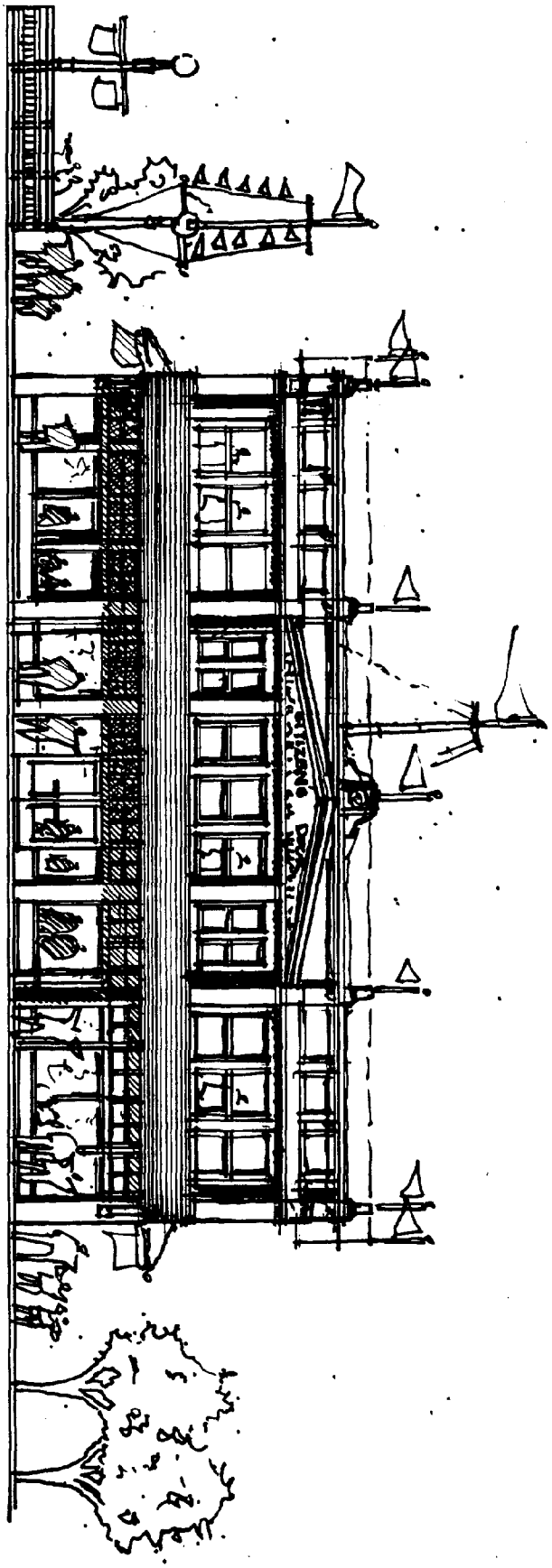


Figure 46
Holly Street Bridge Gateway
Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group



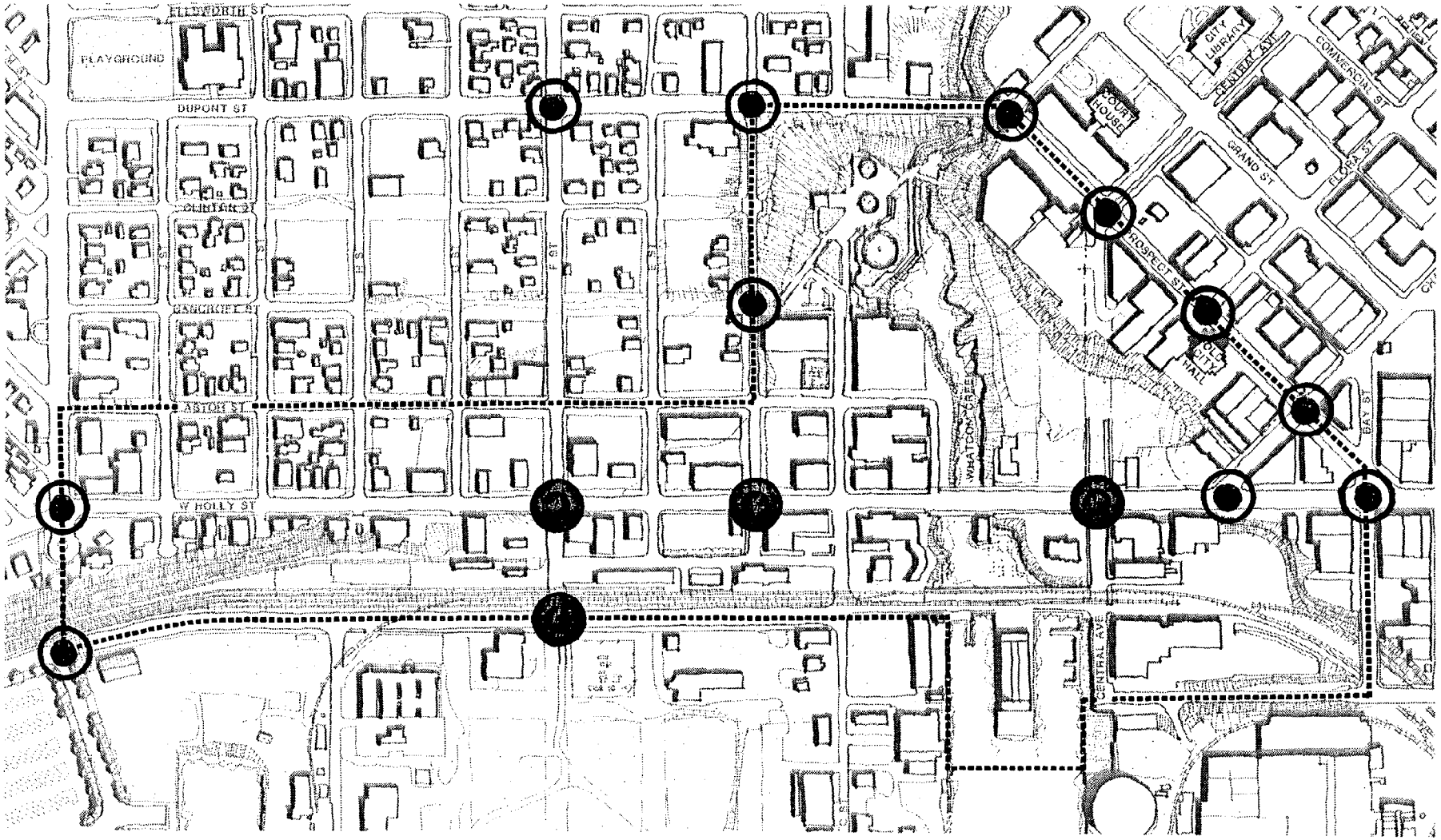


Figure 47

Improvement Project 9: Intersection Improvements

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 9

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Description

Key intersections are identified for distinctive streetscape improvement. Curb extensions, paving, bollards, special landscaping, street furniture, lighting and signage will all contribute to the image making. There will be continuity through the area due to the repeated pattern. Existing clutter will also be reduced to improve area attractiveness and increase safety.

Phasing

Four intersections are of high priority for initial improvement: Roeder/"F", Holly/"F", Holly/"D", and Holly/Central. The other eleven locations are of moderate priority and should be coordinated with adjacent project development.

Budget

A prototypical high priority intersection improvement project was defined to include curb radii, bulbing, brick pavers, signage, lighting (see Project #7). An inclusive cost is estimated at approximately $192,000 per high priorty intersection and $106,000 per intersection for those with secondary improvements.

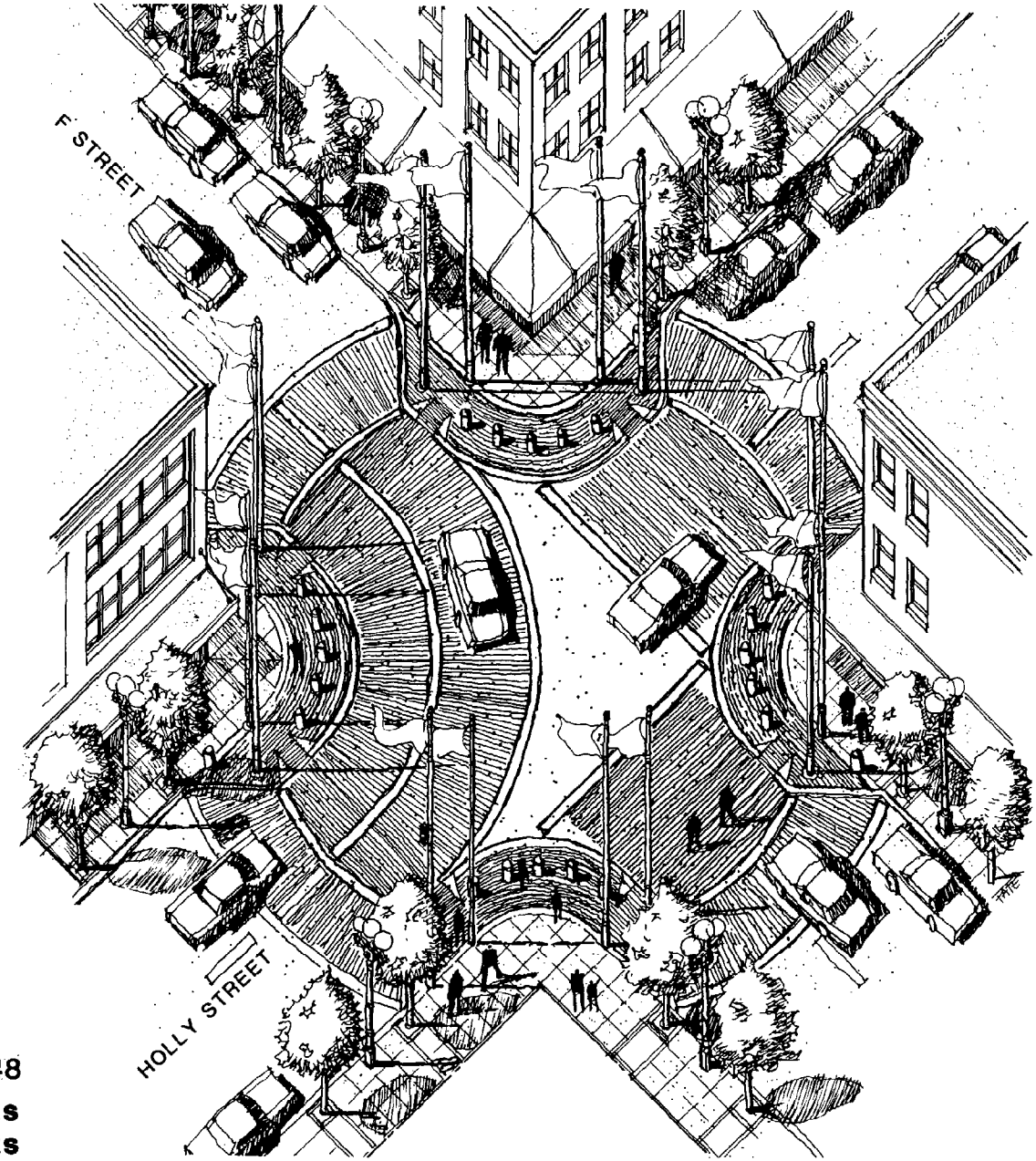


Figure 48
Street Improvements at Holly and 'F' Streets

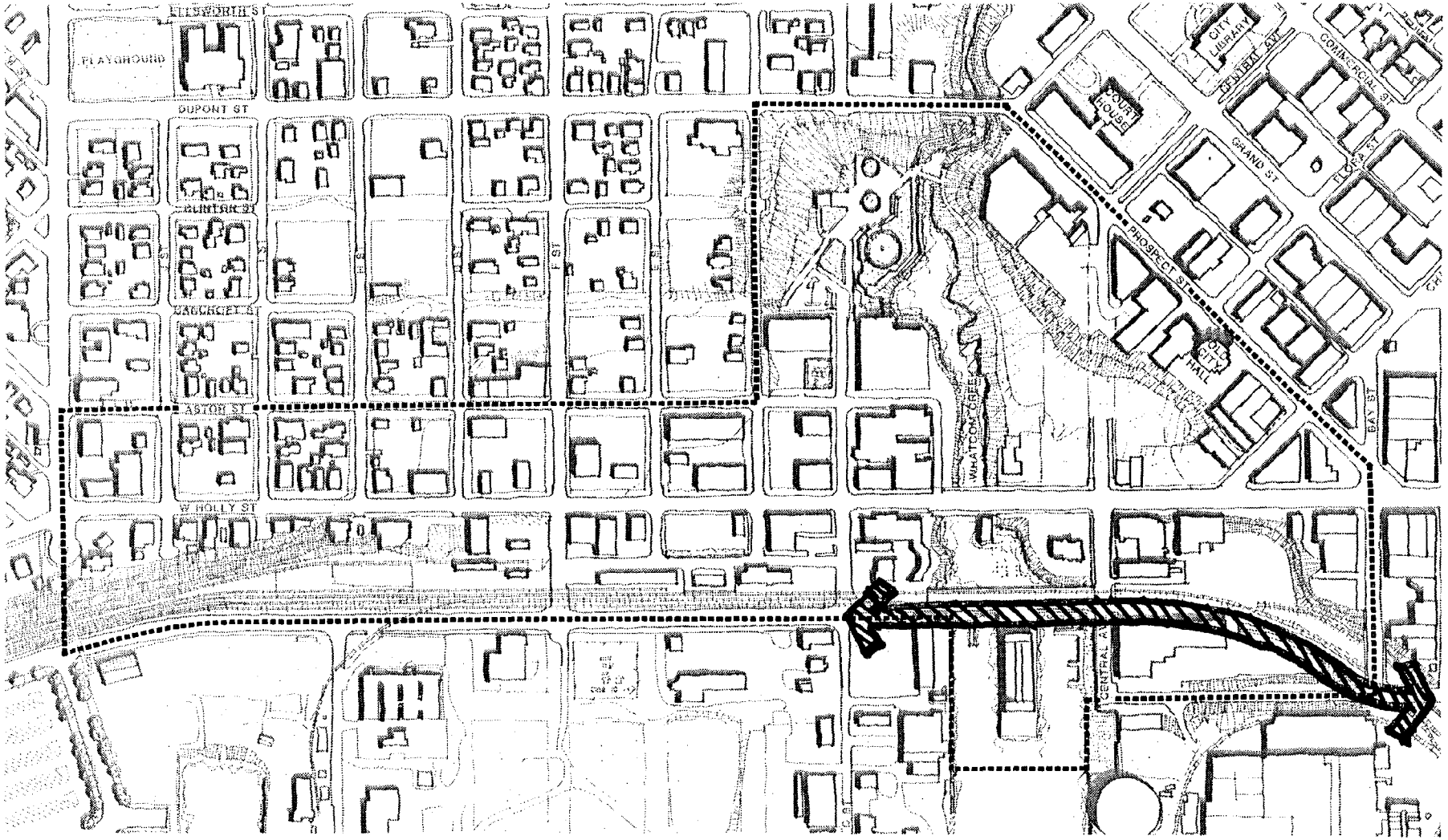


Figure 49

Improvement Project 10: Chestnut/Roeder Realignment

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 10

CHESTNUT/ROEDER
REALIGNMENT

Description

Prior engineering studies have determined the need and the alignment configuration of street improvements at Roeder Avenue and West Chestnut Street. Land swaps for right-of-ways will be necessary. The route will improve truck access as well as other through traffic movement. Lighting, signage, and pedestrian improvements should also be included.

The new alignment will create a clear separation between waterfront marine industry and upland activities. Provision of design features to enhance this separation should be included with the engineering aspects.

Phasing

The new street section and signalization should be accomplished in a single stage and is of high priority.

Budget

Funding is being sought from the State with local sharing of costs. Both City and private contribution is expected to be negotiated. The City has estimated the total project cost to amount to about $2,400,000.

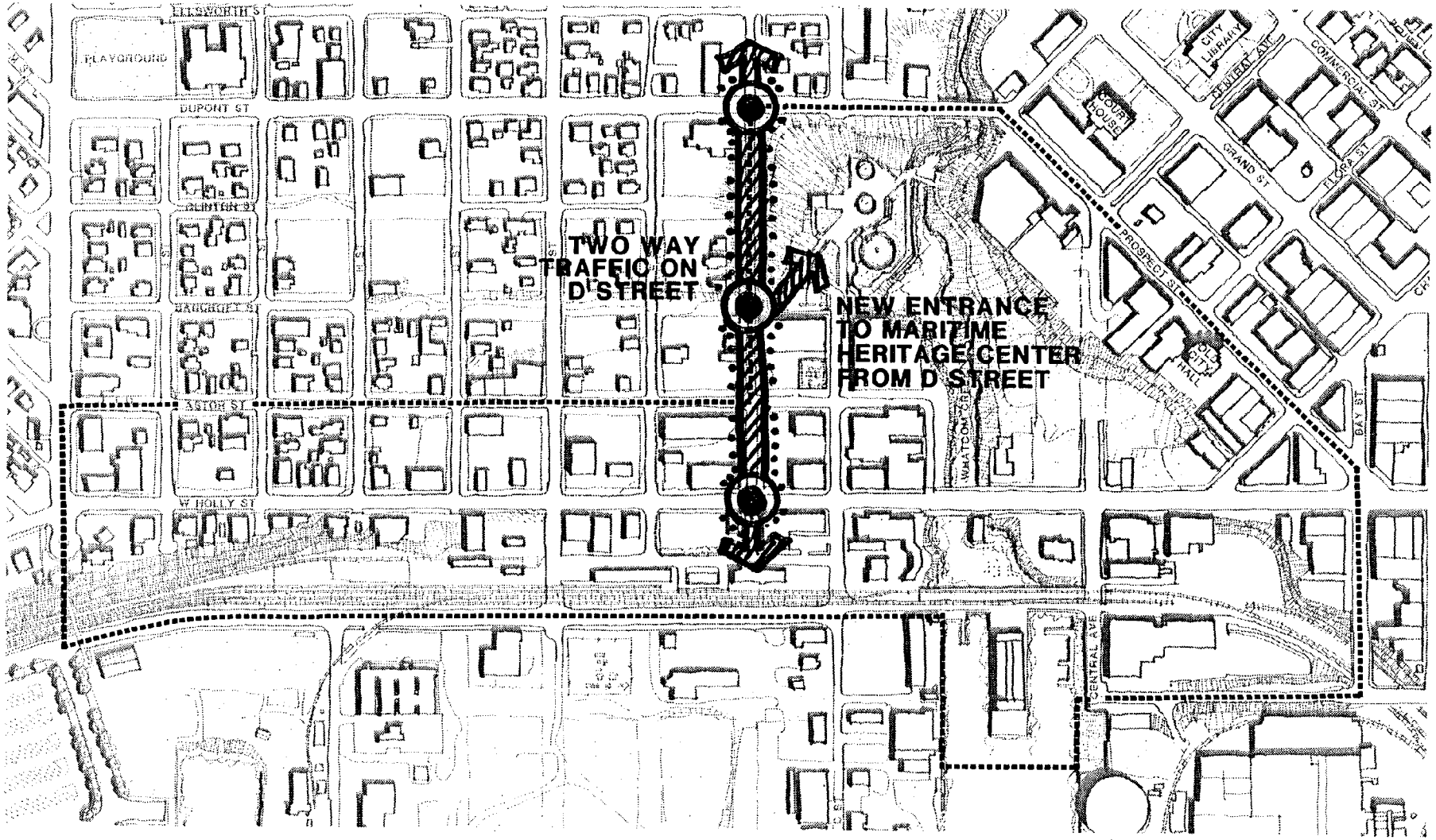


Figure 50

Improvement Project 11: 'D' Street Improvements

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 11

"D" STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Description

The street section of "D" Street will be upgraded to allow two-way traffic and on-street parking within the existing right-of-way. Increased pavement width and revised traffic movement will allow a new main vehicular and pedestrian entrance/exit to the Maritime Heritage Center. Improvements would also include streetscaping and lighting. Improvements at "D" Street intersections (Dupont, Bancroft and Holly) must be coordinated. This work must also be accomplished with Projects #5, #7, and #9.

Pull-outs along "D" Street should allow school bus parking and loading. Sidewalks should also be included.

Phasing

The street improvements should be accomplished in one step, including vehicular access into the Maritime Heritage Center. The projects are of high priority.

Budget

Improvements listed above are estimated at about $462,000.

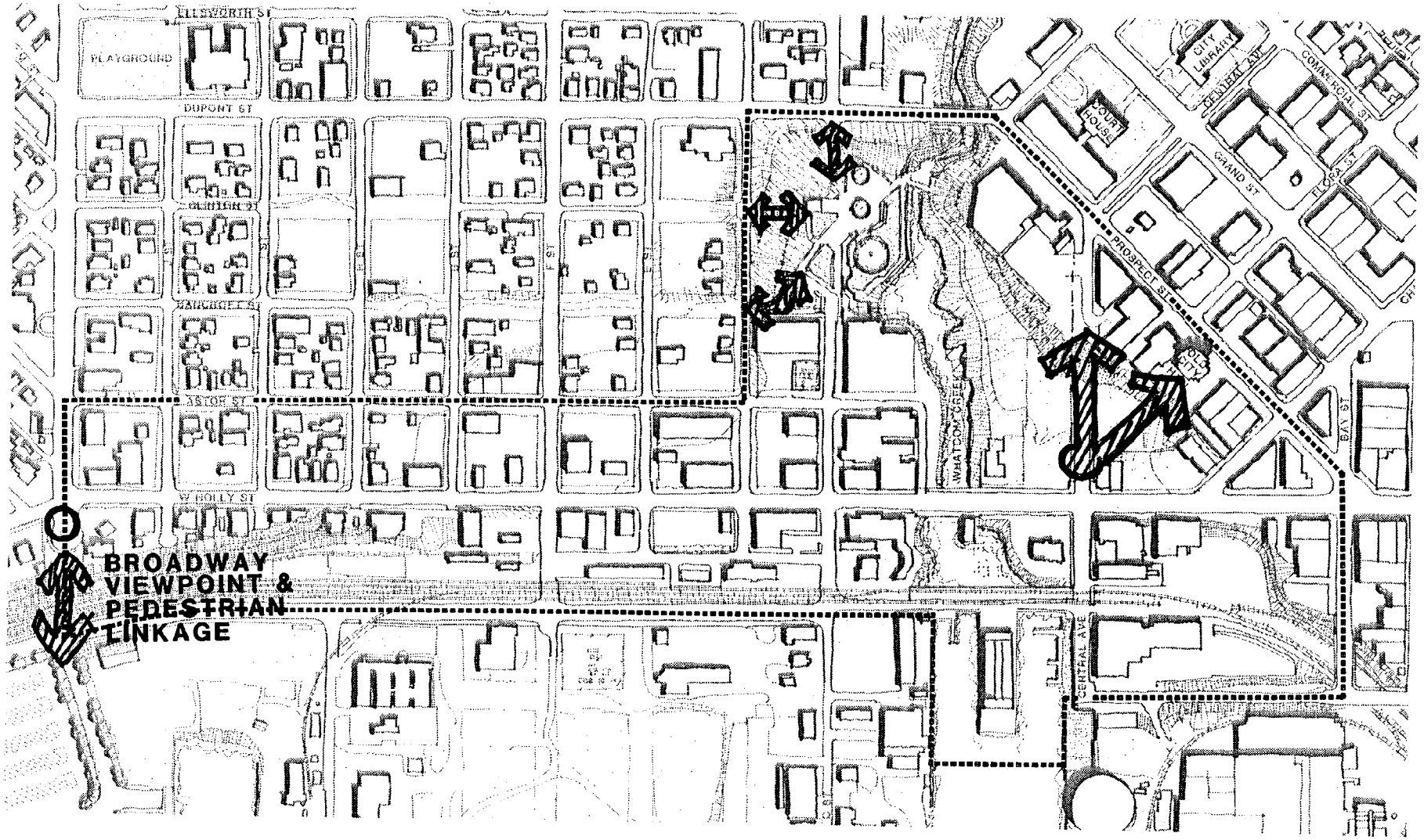


Figure 51

Improvement Project 12: Upland Pedestrian Linkages

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

0 100 500FT

Improvement Project 12

UPLAND PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

Description

The ability for people to move between the upland Government Center, potential entertainment/cultural area and Central Business District, and the Central Waterfront should be improved. Pedestrian paths and stairs, boardwalks and sidewalks, enhanced landscaping, bike routes and shortcuts can be created. Connections to the museum should be made to the Holly/ Central area. Missing links to pedestrian trails through the Maritime Heritage Center should be completed. Finally, opportunities at a Broadway overlook and downhill connection should be captured.

Phasing

The linkages can be phased with adjoining development projects. Initial, minimal improvements can be made with future upgrades possible. Priority is moderate to high.

Budget

Limited pedestrian path projects described above are projected to cost in the range of $126,000. Major hillclimbs or overpasses are substantial in cost and are not included.

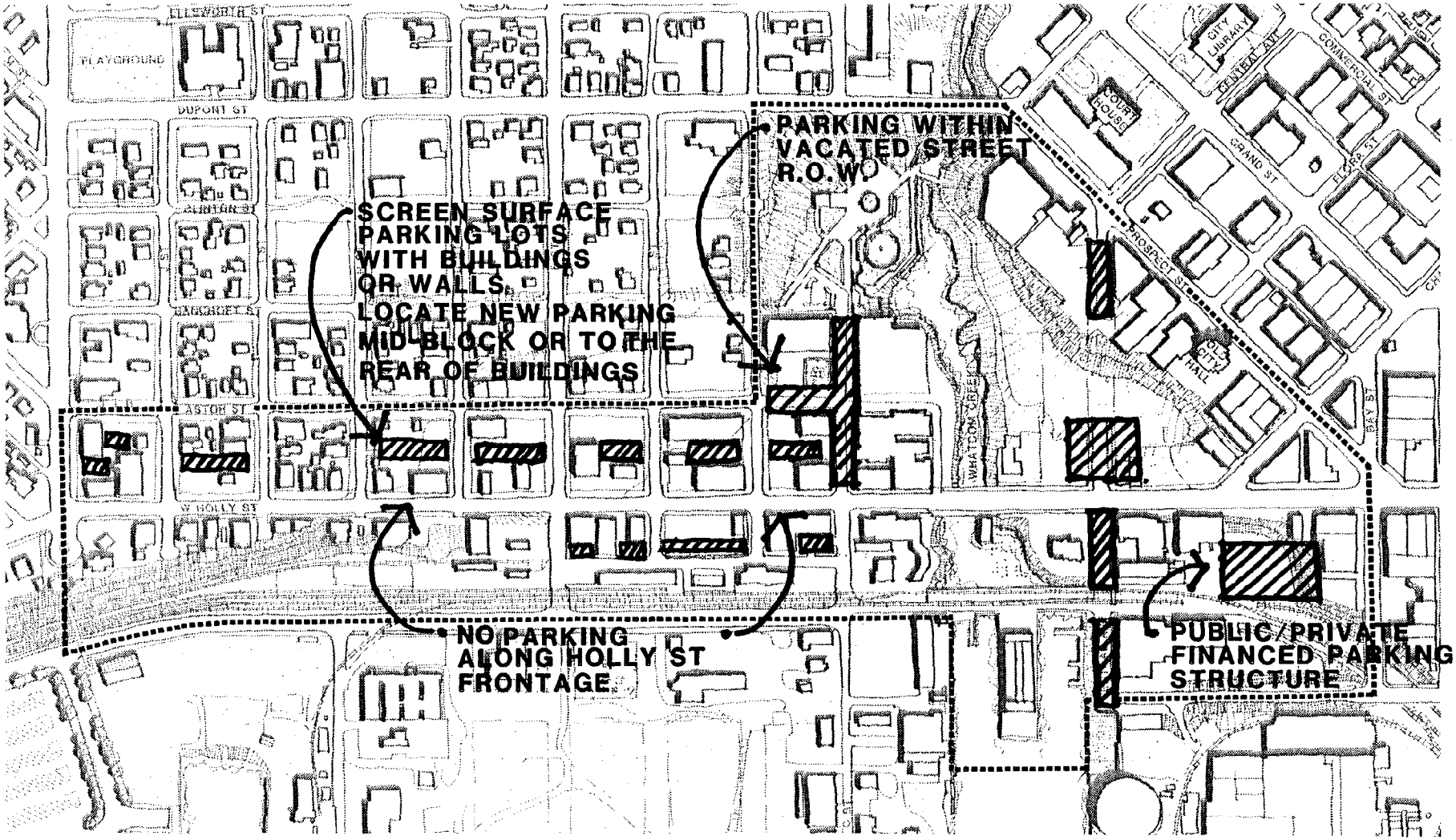


Figure 52

Improvement Project 13: Parking

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 13

PARKING

Description

It is critical that adequate and conveniently located parking be provided to serve Central Waterfront uses. Additional parking is necessary to meet demands of the park and Maritime Heritage Center. In the longer term, a joint public/private parking garage could take advantage of grade differentials between Holly and the realigned Chestnut Street.

Off-street parking should be prohibited along Holly Street. Parking should be located to the rear of the uses to create more continuous building frontages along the street. Dispersed and joint use parking should be encouraged.

The existing public R.O.W. of Astor and "C" Street should be vacated and allow for private parking (see Projects #2, #5 and #11).

Phasing

The public parking to serve the park and Maritime Heritage Center should be accomplished together with high priority. The private parking/block consolidation project is a separate step but also of high priority. Individual parking lot development should occur over time as development projects occur. The timing and need for the public/private garage must be determined.

Budget

Costs of surface parking are expected to be $1.50-$3.00/sf and about $3,305,000 for a 350 stall parking structure.

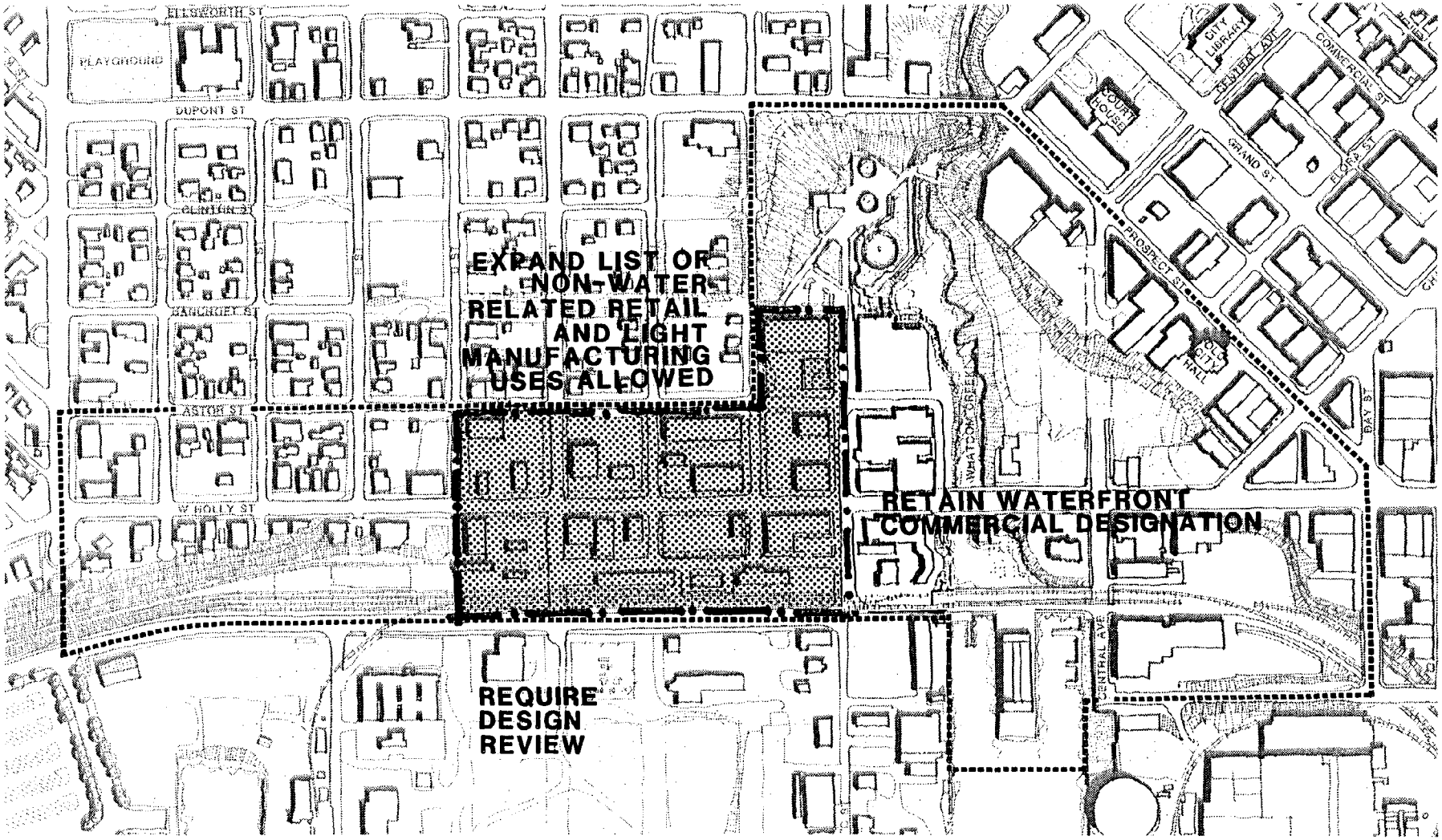


Figure 53

Improvement Project 14: Lettered Streets Area 10 Zoning Changes

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 14

LETTERED STREETS
AREA 10 ZONING CHANGES

Description

Regulatory changes are required to bring action and to implement the desired projects. The types of long established existing uses are encouraged so that currently non-conforming uses would now be allowed to exist and to expand.

The same Central Waterfront designation should be retained but the list of allowable retail and light manufacturing uses should be expanded. Design standards must be followed. Landscaping, protection of residential areas, screening of outdoor storage, etc. will all be required conditions. A Light Manufacturing Land Use designation appears appropriate.

Phasing

The action should be taken in one step and coordinated with related plan elements.

Budget

No cost is directly associated with this legislative action. Incentives and indirect benefits should occur.

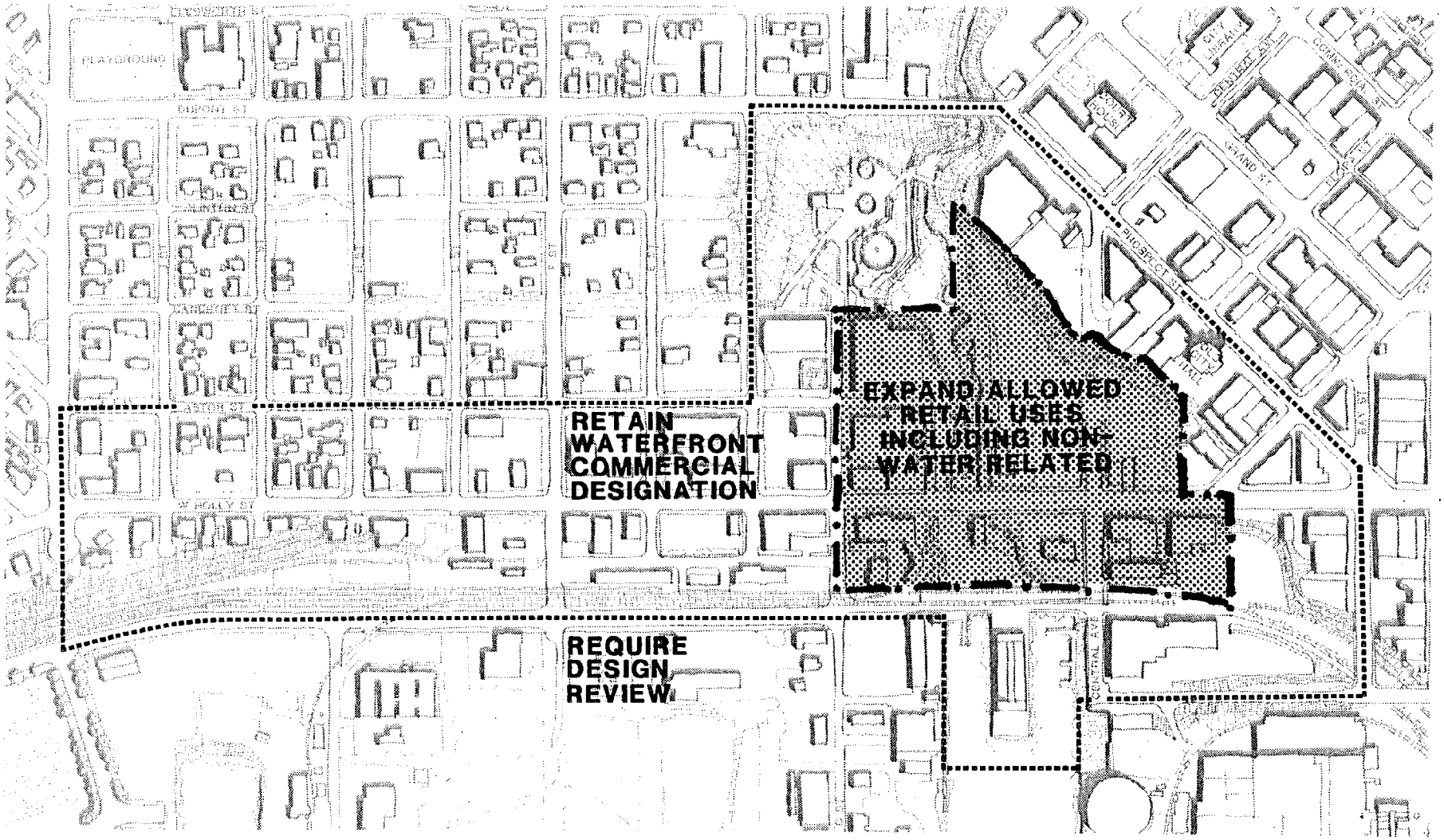


Figure 54

Improvement Project 15: Lettered Streets Area 11 Zoning Changes

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 15

LETTERED STREETS
AREA 11 ZONING CHANGE

Description The current Waterfront Commercial designation should be retained but a broader range of non-water related retail uses should be allowed. The intent is to retain and encourage the generally lower intensity commercial/office/restaurant uses supporting the Central Business District and public properties. Design review is suggested to assure a consistent level of quality as in Project #14.

Phasing The change is a one-time action to be coordinated with related plan elements.

Budget No cost is directly associated with the legislative action.

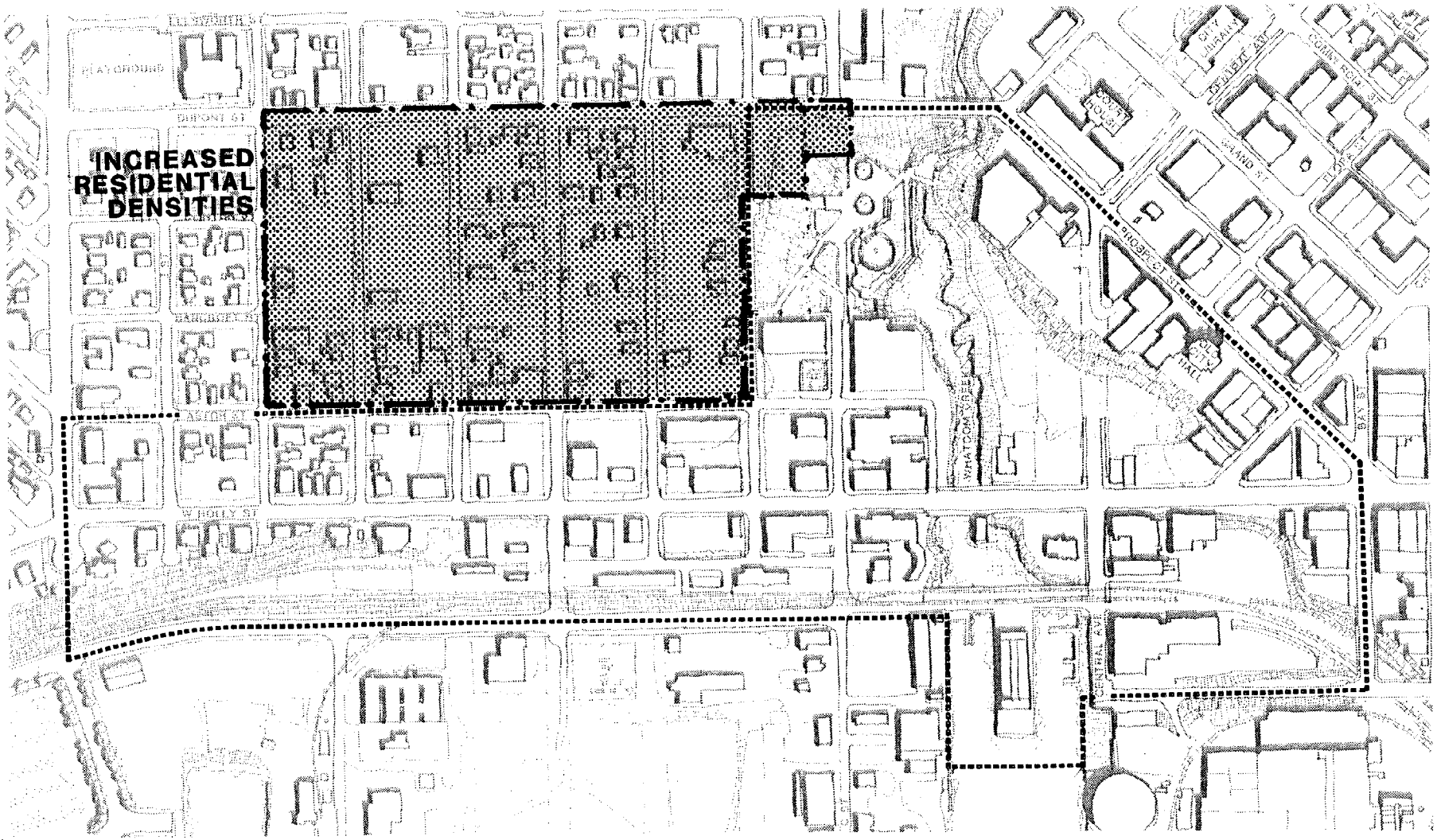


Figure 55

Improvement Project 16: Lettered Streets New Area 14 Zoning Change

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 16

LETTERED STREETS NEW
AREA 14 ZONING CHANGE

Description

Incentives are suggested to promote residential development on larger sites, retain historic buildings and take advantage of public open space amenities of the Maritime Heritage Center. A new planning area or modifications to existing ones are possible implementing approaches. Specifically, the existing density requirement of one residential unit per 1,500 square foot of lot area should be eliminated. Also, contribution of fees to the City in lieu of required open space should be allowed. This approach could allow increased densities and provide dedicated funds for improvements to the Maritime Heritage Center.

Phasing

A single action is recommended.

Budget

No cost is directly associated with this project.

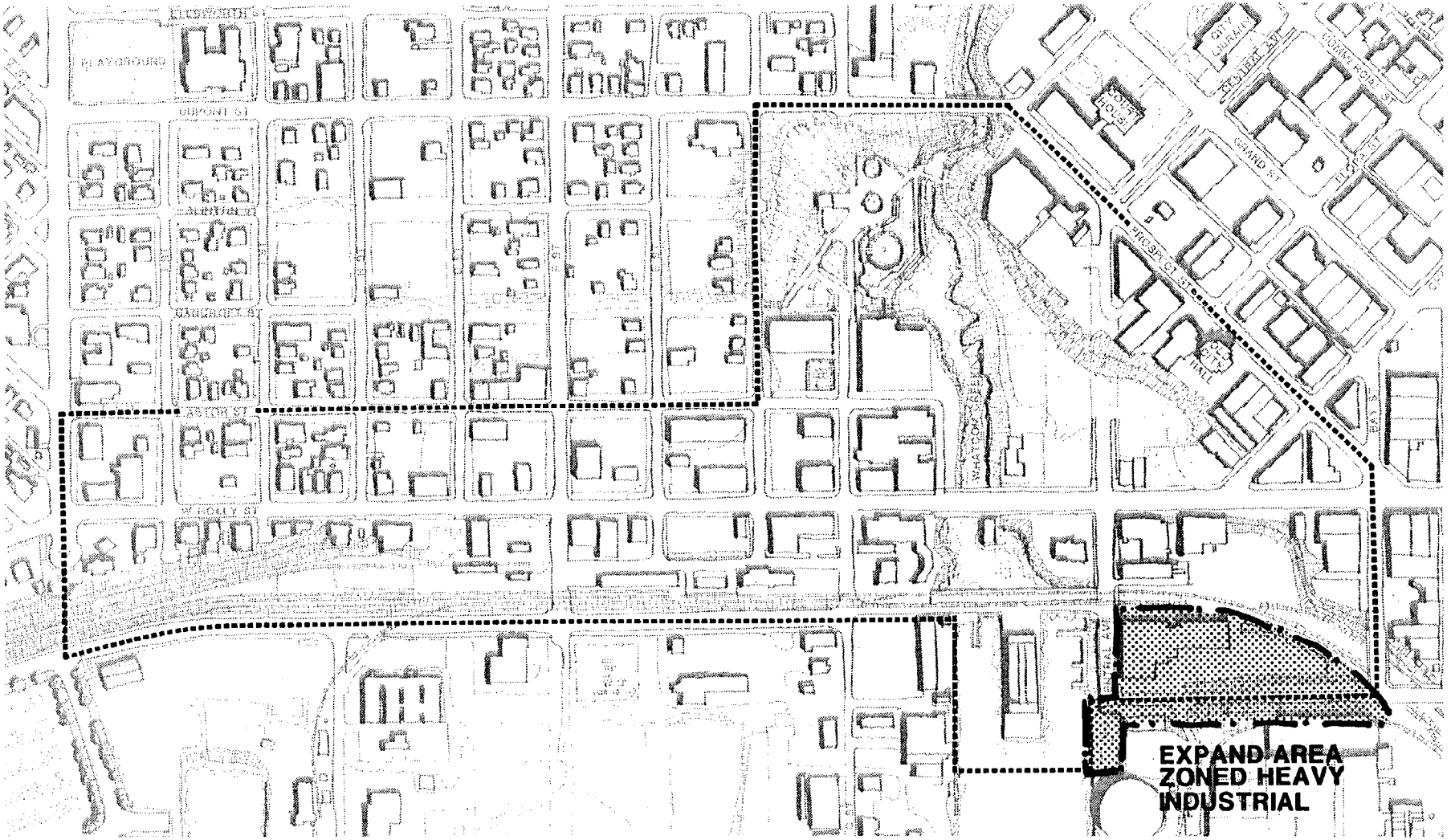


Figure 56

Improvement Project 17: CBD Area 15 Zoning Changes

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Improvement Project 17

CBD AREA 15
ZONING CHANGES

Description

This project is essentially the necessary legislative regulatory change to allow Project #6. The area is now designated Waterfront Commercial and Central Commercial in the Bellingham Plan. When the Chestnut/Roeder Avenue connection is constructed and Citizens Dock is relocated upland, a physically distinct, water-related area will be defined. This area should be changed to a Heavy Industrial designation as part of CBD Area 15. Expansion of Georgia-Pacific can then be accommodated consistent with the concept of heavy marine industrial uses waterside of Roeder Avenue.

Phasing

A one-time action is appropriate.

Budget

No direct costs are associated with the action. However, public/private negotiations are necessary related to this action and Projects #2, #6, and #10.

IMPLEMENTATION

The seventeen Improvement Projects will be the catalyst to bring about desired change in the Central Waterfront. Coordinated action, appropriately timed and sequenced is critical.

A summary of the phased actions, with public/private responsibilities and costs is given in Figure 57. No specific timeline is defined because of the need for flexibility and uncertainty with funding availability. However, it is recommended that the steps taken to implement the plan be significant ones rather than small incremental actions. Timing is likely to be in stages: 0-3 years, 3-6 years, and 6-10 years to complete the revitalization.

Figure 58 shows a further detailed outline of recommended implementation. Variations will likely occur given uncertainties with funding and decision-making. Several projects are interrelated while others are dependent on related actions occurring first as indicated in the chart. Further detailed cost estimates and project descriptions/assumptions are included in the Appendix.

Figure 57
Implementation Schedule

	Estimated Construction Costs (1986 Dollars)	Responsibility
Step One		
• Chestnut/Roeder Realignment	$2,400,00	Public/Private
• Citizens Dock Relocation and Rehabilitation (including land acquisition)	$ 517,000	Public/Private
• Public Waterfront Access:		
- Area adjacent to Citizens Dock	$ 435,000	Public
- Public Viewpoint/Observation Platform	$ 254,000	Public
- Roeder Viewpoint	$ 325,000	Public
• Public/Private Development Projects:		
- Office @ Dupont/"D"	$1,159,000	Private
- Retail @ Holly Street	$ 864,000	Private
• CBD Area 15 Zoning Change	0	Public
Step Two		
• Public Waterfront Access:		
- Old Colony Wharf Promenade	$ 634,000	Public
• Maritime Interpretive Center	not determined	Public/Private
• Consolidated Development Area	0	Public/Private
• "D" Street Improvements	$ 462,000	Public
• Letter Streets Area 10 Zoning Change	0	Public
• Lettered Streets Area 11 Zoning Change	0	Public

Figure 57
Implementation Schedule (cont.)

	Estimated Construction Costs (1986 Dollars)	Responsibility
Step Two, continued		
• Lettered Streets New Area 14 Zoning Change	0	Public
• Heavy Industrial Expansion	-	Private
• CBD Area 15 Zoning Change	0	Public
Step Three		
• Public Waterfront Access: - Central Avenue	$ 380,000	Public
• Holly/Roeder Streetscape	$1,433,000	Public/Private
• Holly Street Bridge/Gateway	$ 288,000	Public
• Intersection Improvements - "F"/Roeder - "F"/Holly - Holly/"D" - Holly/General	$ 767,000	Public/Private
• Upland Pedestrian Links	$ 126,000	Public
Future		
• Intersection Improvements - Other Identified Intersections	$1,164,000	Public/Private
• Parking Structure	$3,305,000	Public/Private

Figure 58
Improvement Projects Outline

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS	PRIORITY	ESTIMATED BUDGET	REQUIRED ACTIONS	TIMING SEQUENCE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
1. Citizen's Dock Relocation and Rehabilitation	High	$442,000	- determine engineering feasibility - acquire private property to expand park - prepare detailed design and cost estimate - secure funding	First Step with Project 2A	City Council/Mayor with Planning and Economic Development Department
2. Public Waterfront Access	High	$2,028,000	- acquire property/easements for promenade - secure funding - prepare detailed designs		Planning and Economic Development Department
A. Area adjacent to Citizen's Dock				A. First Step with Project 1	
B. Old Colony Wharf Promenade				B. Second Step with Projects 5, 11, 14 & 15	
C. Public viewpoint/ observation platform				C. First Step with Project 1	
D. Roeder viewpoint/ traffic pull-out				D. First Step with Project 1	
E. Central Avenue access				E. Third Step	
3. Maritime Interpretive Center	Moderate	Not Determined	- seek out donated exhibit material and funding		Planning and Economic Development with Museum and Maritime Heritage Center
4. Public/Private Development Projects	High	$2,023,000	- attract private developers - make public property available - assess feasibility, fiscal impacts	First step	Planning and Economic Development
A. Office (Dupont/D)					
B. Retail (Holly Street)					

Figure 58
Improvement Projects Outline (cont.)

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS	PRIORITY	ESTIMATED BUDGET	REQUIRED ACTIONS	TIMING SEQUENCE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
5. Consolidated Development Area	High	Ø	- negotiate with property owners	Second Step with Projects 2A, 11, 14 & 15	Planning and Economic Development with Engineering Department and Property Owners
6. Heavy Industrial Expansion	High	Ø	- negotiate cost sharing with Georgia-Pacific	Third Step with Projects 10 and 17	Planning and Economic Development with Georgia-Pacific
7. Holly/Roeder Streetscape	High	$1,428,000	- prepare detailed designs and cost estimate - obtain funding	Fourth Step with Projects 8, 9A, & 11	Planning and Economic Development with Engineering Department
8. Holly Street Bridge/ Gateway	High	$288,000	- prepare detailed designs and cost estimate - obtain funding	Fourth Step with Projects 7, 9A, and 11	Planning and Economic Development with Engineering Department
9. Intersection Improvements					Planning and Economic Development with Engineering Department
A. F/Roeder, F/Holly, Holly/D, Holly/Central	High	$767,000	- prepare detailed designs and cost estimate	A. Fourth Step with Projects 7, 8, & 11	
B. Other Intersections	Moderate	$1,164,000	- obtain funding	B. Future Step	
10. Chestnut/Roeder Realignment	High	$_____ (City Estimate)	- apply for/obtain State funding - negotiate with Georgia-Pacific - prepare detailed design	Third Step with Projects 4B, 6 & 17	Engineering Department with Planning/Economic Development and Georgia-Pacific
11. "D" Street Implementation	High	$462,000	- prepare detailed designs and cost estimate - obtain funding	Second Step with Projects 2A, 5, 14, & 15	Engineering Department with Maritime Heritage Center

Figure 58
Improvement Projects Outline (cont.)

IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS	PRIORITY	ESTIMATED BUDGET	REQUIRED ACTIONS	TIMING SEQUENCE	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
12. Upland Pedestrian Links	Moderate	$126,000	- coordinate linkages with development - obtain funding	Fourth Step	Planning and Economic Development
13. Parking Structure	Low	$3,305,000	- negotiate joint public/ private property development - determine parking demand/ feasibility	Future Step when demand warrants	Engineering Department
14. Lettered Streets Area 10	High	Ø	- prepare staff analysis/ recommendation - obtain legislative approvals	Second Step with Projects 2A, 5, 11, & 15	Planning and Economic Development with Planning Commission
15. Lettered Streets Area 11	High	Ø	- prepare staff analysis/ recommendation - obtain legislative approvals	Second Step with Projects 2A, 5, 11 & 14	Planning and Economic Development with Planning Commission
16. Lettered Streets New Area 14	High	Ø	- prepare staff analysis/ recommendation - obtain legislative approvals	Second Step with Project 4	Planning and Economic Development with Planning Commission
17. CBD Area 15	High	Ø	- prepare staff analysis/ recommendation - obtain legislative approvals	Third Step with Projects 6 & 10	Planning and Economic Development with Planning Commission

Economic Development Incentives and Funding Sources

A number of ideas are available for public-sector actions or programs to induce economic growth and market demand within the Central Waterfront. Among them are:

- Providing tax incentives for developers (i.e. reduction or abatements)
- Favorable pricing of public services such as water and sewer
- Public lease commitments for space in new private commercial developments
- Public assistance in site assembly
- Favorable public ground leases
- Formation of transfer of development rights (TDR)
- Land exchanges between the public and private sectors

The above incentives would assist in the creation of new growth and opportunities in the private and public sectors.

Potential local, state and federal funding sources have been used in the past in other locations and are potentially relevant for the Central Waterfront projects.

The current status of these programs is effected by current budget cuts. The following programs appear to be the most likely sources for development and infrastructure improvement financing.

- For Project Development:
  - IAC Grants (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation)
  - UDAG's (Urban Development Action Grants)
  - SBA (Small Business Administration 503 and 7A Loan programs)
  - Block Grants

- Infrastructure Financing:
  - LIDs (Local Improvement Districts)
  - C.E.R.B. Loans and Grants (Community Economic Revitalization Board)
  - Public Infrastructure Trust Programs
  - E.D.A (Economic Development Administration Title I Grants)
  - City General Obligation Bonds

Project Development Funding

Project development funding will likely involve combinations of the above listed programs with heavier dependence on the Federal programs (UDAG, SBA and Block Grants). Key sources are highlighted.

Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG)

The UDAG program was formed in 1977 and is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The purpose of the program is to provide incentives (funding) for private investment in cities. Cities must be on UDAG's eligibility list to qualify for funding, which Bellingham is. Eligible development types include residential, commercial and industrial uses. UDAG applications are evaluated based on a specific set of criteria which includes estimating the projects:

- Importance in stimulating private investment
- Potential to generate new employment for low and moderate income people
- Effect on the city's downtown economy
- Potential economic impact on the overall community

UDAG funds may be appropriate for development of commercial and/or retail projects proposed in the Central Waterfront (Dupont, "D", and Holly Streets).

Small Business Administration (SBA)

The Small Business Administration provides long-term loans at below market rates through their 503 and 7A programs. Eligible businesses must have a net worth of at least $6 million.

Newly established businesses are eligible only if they have principals in the firm who have proven abilities and experiences in the particular business areas. The 503 program can be used to fund new construction, land purchases and equipment.

The 7A program is used to fund working capital only. SBA loans are restricted to business owners and users and are not available to developers. The typical funding mix is 50% from a private lender, 40% from a SBA loan ($500,000 maximum) and 10% equity. SBA loans could be instrumental in providing needed capital for expansion of existing businesses and/or new start-ups in the waterfront area.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

CDBG's are administered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development and are directed mostly towards housing and commercial/ industrial developments. The eligibility criteria evaluates projects according to:

- Their ability to promote private investment and community revitalization
- The amount of long-term employment potentially generated for low and moderate income persons

Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)

IAC was created as a State agency in 1964 to assist state and local agencies in the acquisition and development of outdoor recreational areas. In order to be eligible for funding, jurisdictions must meet a series of requirements, including being on an applied eligible list and having a current Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The City of Bellingham has a comprehensive parks plan but needs to update it to maintain eligibility, which they are in the process of doing. Local jurisdictions must provide a minimum of 25% of the total project costs with the remainder composed of state and/or federal funds administered by the IAC. Improvements to the Maritime Heritage Center may be partially funded by this program.

Infrastructure Funding

A series of five local, state, and federal programs were listed as potential funding sources for proposed infrastructure improvements in the Target Area.

Community Economic Revitalization Board and
Public Infrastructure Trust Fund

Two of the five proposed programs are State funded and administered Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) and the Public Infrastructure Trust programs. The improvements to Roeder Street were in fact partially funded by the Public Infrastructure Trust Fund.

Economic Development Administration (EDA)

The EDA is a federally funded program whose purpose is to enhance the national economy by assisting areas in economic distress. The program is administered under two sections, Title 1 which funds infrastructure and other public improvements and Title 9 which is used for strategic planning and implementation studies. EDA grants are available to states, cities, redevelopment areas, economic development councils and other non-profit agencies working on redevelopment.

Local Improvement Districts (LID)

Local funding sources may include the formation of LIDs and the use of General Obligation bonds. All or portions of the proposed streetscape improvements such as those planned for Holly/"F"/Roeder corridor could be paid for by an LID given the potential benefit to business fronting the Holly/"F"/Roeder corridor.

General Obligation (GO) Bonds

The City will likely use GO bonds to fund portions of the planned infrastructure and public facility capital improvements in the Central Waterfront area. GO bonds which are secured by the sponsoring jurisdiction require voter approval. The bonding jurisdiction must also be within the prescribed indebtedness levels in order to issue a GO bond. The City of Bellingham's current indebtedness level is very low, making the issuance of GO bonds possible.

In summary, various local, state, and federal sources are available, although at a reduced level from past years, to assist in the funding of the proposed development and infrastructure improvements. The funding of the plan elements will likely involve the combination of the various programs previously described.

Planning Background

As part of the planning process for Bellingham's Central Waterfront, a series of "charrettes" or intensive participatory work sessions were held with members of the Waterfront Task Force, Technical Committee and general public to gather and review planning data/facts, provide direction and create solutions.

These charrettes were documented in a series of Progress Reports which are a separate Technical Appendix. These reports document the detailed background data collection and planning analysis done during the course of the 16 week planning process. This section highlights key issues, goals and objectives, physical and environmental analysis, regulatory assessment, and the market analysis and business survey. Further, the derivation and evaluation of alternatives is described.

ISSUES

The first Issues and Directions Charrette was held in Bellingham on March 4, 1986. The purpose of the charrette was to confirm data collected during the first four study tasks. The first task was to define the key issues concerning the redevelopment of the Central Waterfront.

1. The Plan for the Central Waterfront must be "implementable".

A number of studies had been done within the study area over the years including the Whatcom Creek Plan of 1973, the Coastal Zone Management Study of 1977, and the Civic Center Plan of 1978. Little in the way of specific improvement projects has resulted from these studies. The desire for specific improvement project recommendations was expressed.

2. Another issue was the Type, Amount and Location of Land Uses to be developed within the Central Waterfront.

Historically the area was the original town site of Whatcom, which later became Bellingham. The original settlement had a mix of land uses. It was typical of a frontier town in the Northwest with fish processing plants and saw mills sharing the narrow beachfront with retail stores, residential hotels, shipbuilding, warehousing, and civic buildings.

As Bellingham developed and geographically expanded, the Central Waterfront area was dominated by manufacturing, warehousing and marine industrial uses. The most significant remaining use is the large Georgia-Pacific Pulp and Paper Mill located along the Whatcom Creek Waterway and at the mouth of Whatcom Creek.

Over the years these industrial functions influenced the types of land uses locating within the Central Waterfront. In recent years, there have been successful efforts by industrial users to improve the water quality and reduce noise and air quality impacts caused by operations. Development pressure increased to provide a wider range of uses within the area, while at the same time protecting existing longtime businesses from displacement. The issue of compatibility of industrial uses with new uses was raised. Also, there was the issue of water-dependent/water-related retail uses being required even though most of the zoned area was isolated from direct water access. The Whatcom Creek Waterway is the only navigable portion of the waterfront yet water-related use restrictions apply elsewhere.

3. There is the need for Economic Development within the area.

The City and Fourth Corner Development Group sought ways to renew economic growth in Bellingham. The Plan should attract new development to the area and should suggest specific improvement projects and public amenities that would stimulate investment. The City felt that public improvements already made at the Maritime Heritage Center could be built upon and become a focus for new economic growth.

4. The fourth major issue expressed was the need for Group Consensus for Action.

For any plan to work it would have to have consensus among the various public and private interest in the area. Active participation in the study included representatives of the City including the Mayor, the Port of Bellingham, Georgia-Pacific, the Fourth Corner Development Company, the Bellingham Planning Commission, Western Washington University, as well as property owners, businesses in the area and the general public.

Other Concerns

In addition to these key issues, a number of other concerns were voiced during the charrette by various participants. These are summarized below:

Land Use

- How much land should be allocated for Waterfront Industrial uses?
- What level of water/land use relationship should be established?
- What is the balance between uses with technical/functional waterfront needs versus those that desire waterfront proximity?
- Displacement of smaller businesses.
- Waterfront trends: the decline of Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing uses and increase in Commercial uses.
- The relationship between the number of employees in relation to land area. Encourage labor intensive uses given limited waterfront sites. More employees per square foot.
- Shipping requires large land area with large economic return for a limited number of employees.

Georgia-Pacific

- Continue plant operations without public objections.
- Minimize chances for public exposure/conflict.
- Support Heavy and Light Industrial uses. Some Office/Commercial use is acceptable.
- Oppose residential, hotel, convention center-type development that would be people intensive with 24 hour presence.

City

- Want revitalization of Central Waterfront area.
- Must stimulate and attract private development projects.
- Maritime Heritage Center is major public investment.
- Area clean-up is desired.
- Citizens Dock should be saved and relocated.
- Willing to re-assess City zoning.
- Public/private funding needed to save Citizens Dock.

Fourth Corner Development Group

- Want economic improvement of area.
- Encourage uses that tend toward Light Industrial and Commercial such as Sash and Door and St. John's Glass in a transition area.
- Specialty Retail/Office/Commercial uses are supportive of CBD
- Desire a strong linkage along Holly Street between CBD and Squalicum Harbor.
- Encourage but separate Heavy Industrial uses south of Roeder Avenue.
- Concentrate retail and office uses in CBD such uses in Target Areas should support CBD

Port

- Support Heavy Industrial uses along Whatcom Creek Waterway.
- Support a mix of Light Industrial, Office and Specialty Retail Commercial uses within Target Area.
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian linkages between Squalicum Harbor and the CBD
- Interest in Convention Center and hotel at Squalicum Harbor.

Others

- Flexibility in regulations may encourage change.
- Economic commitment and predictability are necessary assurance for private investment.
- Environmental quality and aesthetics must be improved.
- Recognize residential uses bordering hillside and desired compatibility.
- Property assemblage difficulties from multiple ownership.
- Historic "Old Town" pride of property owners creates strong personal ties.
- Protect and enhance land value.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In addition to the four major issues and other concerns debated during the initial charrette, a number of goals and objectives for the Plan were discussed. Included were the following:

- Encourage investment, not just market response
- Change or modify zoning in the area
- Protect and enhance existing businesses
- Improve Roeder and Holly Streets
- Improve the Maritime Heritage Center
- Control nuisances such as odors, and
- Create land use flexibility through such things as design guidelines

In addition to these general goals and objectives, the various participants in the study expressed a number of general goals. Some of these have been expressed in other planning documents such as the Bellingham Plan and the Shoreline Management Master Program. Still others are objectives of the Port of Bellingham, the Fourth Corner Development Company, and Georgia-Pacific. The following goals affect the Central Waterfront Planning area.

City

- Develop urban open space amenities to vitalize the CBD and adjacent areas.
- The Shoreline Master Program should be amended to permit passive urbanization (fountains, bulkheads, etc.) in trade for public accessibility.
- Capitalize on the commercial and public access potential of the waterfront area, including Whatcom Creek.
- Retain historic and cultural resources.
- Minimize adverse impacts among incompatible uses and different use districts.

- Provide pedestrian connections to link the CBD, Civic Center, and the Waterfront.
- Rehabilitate Citizens Dock and other suitable old buildings for appropriate waterfront uses.
- Develop the Central Waterfront as a commercial, recreational, and Marine Use Center.
- Provide opportunities for public viewing of Georgia-Pacific operations and maritime activities.
- Areas along navigable waterway should be retained for water-dependent and water-related uses.
- Expand and diversity employment base.
- Strengthen the CBD and capitalize on the proximity of the CBD to the Central Waterfront in order to revitalize this important area.
- Planning for the CBD and Waterfront should provide for a transition to appropriate retail, commercial, entertainment center, recreational, governmental, cultural, service, marine, industrial and tourist-related uses.
- Encourage multi-use development providing public access.

Port of Bellingham

- Work with new and existing businesses.
- Promote the local economy, tourism and recreation.
- Serve the people of Bellingham considering by not controlled only by economics.

- Create a design quality and assure compatibilities necessary for a working waterfront with recreational opportunities.
- Encourage a viable mix of businesses.
- Assume the Port will act as the catalyst toward successful development by making trend-setting improvements.

Georgia-Pacific

- Bellingham Division should continue as a major operating arm of Georgia-Pacific Corporation.
- Produce pulp, paper, and chemical products for domestic and worldwide markets.
- Assure environmental protection.
- Be a good neighbor.
- "Working man's town" should have acceptable uses.
- Citizens Dock should be moved.

Fourth Corner Development Group

- Fourth Corner Development Group is organized to provide leadership and services for economic development of Whatcom County.
- Fourth Corner Development Group Board consists of representatives of education, municipal corporations, and private businesses.
- Market Whatcom County.
- Assist businesses in locating and prospering in the community.
- Improve governmental processing of project (siting and regulatory aspects).

Others:
Property Owners/
Private Interests/
General Public

- Burlington Northern to maintain existing tracks as major routes serving Bellingham.
- Maritime Heritage Foundation has major interest in Central Waterfront as well as the Lettered Streets Neighborhood.
- Avoid displacement of existing businesses in the area.
- Allow for greater range of retail uses.
- Change zoning to allow non-water related retail uses.
- Facilitate the realignment of Roeder and Chestnut.
- Encourage more people-oriented activities in the study area.
- Save Citizens Dock.
- Create an inward focus around Whatcom Creek.

All the goals and objectives were used as a basis for the development of land use alternatives for the Central Waterfront area. They were also a basis for preparing evaluation criteria.

PHYSICAL/ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

A physical/environmental analysis of the Central Waterfront area was conducted to determine the potentials and constraints of the area. Planning determinates were defined that affect future use and development. The focus of the analysis was the area identified as the Central Waterfront Target Area. This area comprises approximately 63 acres of which 26 acres are within the public right-of-way and 37 acres are platted land (Figure 11: Study Area.)

In addition, a larger Influence Area was examined in order to understand context in which the Central Waterfront exists and the potential impacts changes in the Target Area may have on surrounding neighborhoods. This Influence Area included Squalicum Harbor, the Lettered Streets Neighborhood, the Central Business District (CBD), and the Georgia-Pacific Industrial Area south of the CBD The Influence Area comprised approximately 400 acres including the Target Area.

The physical and environmental analysis considered the following:

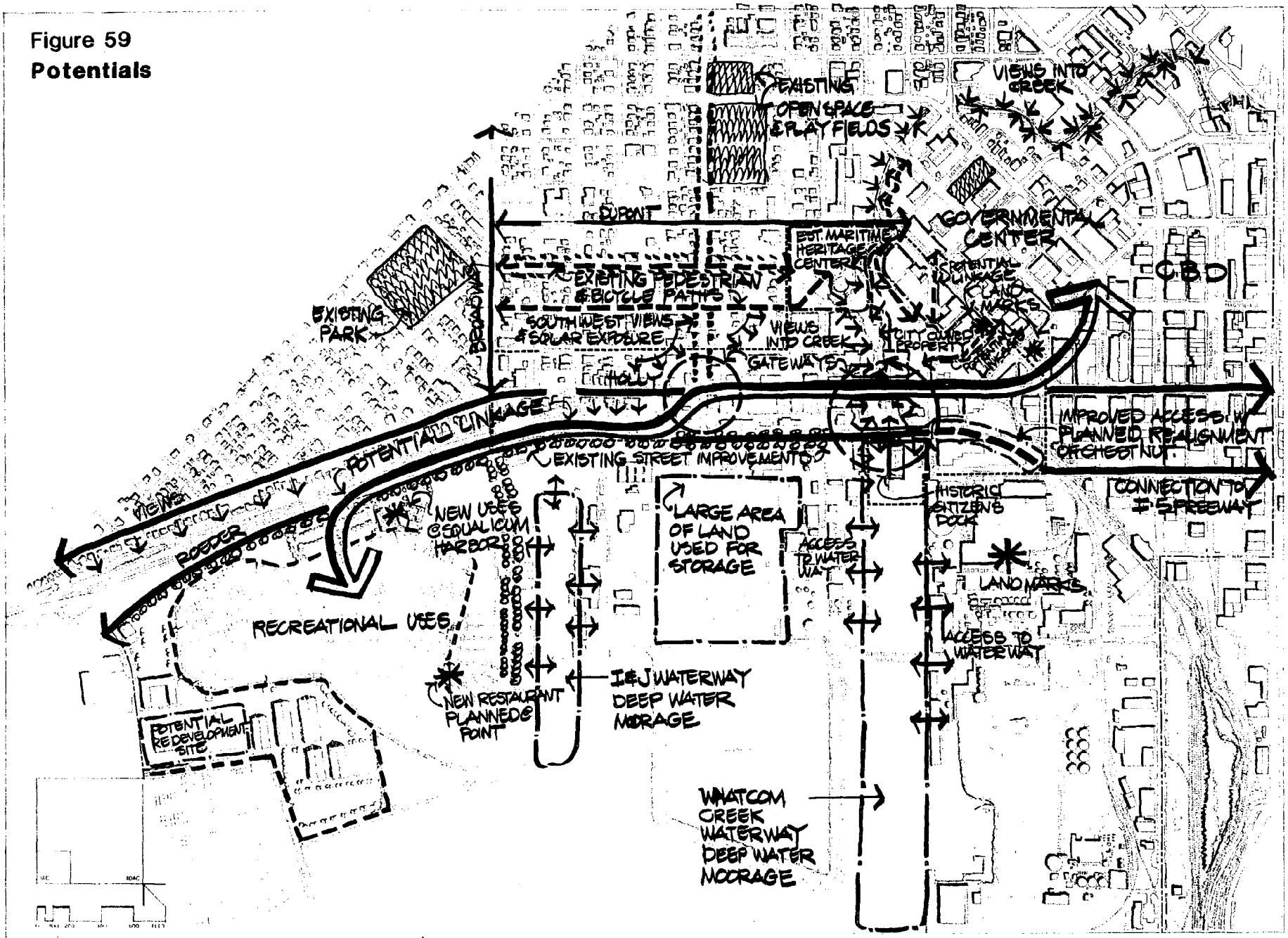
- The Influence Area identification
- The Target Area identification
- History of development
- Existing land uses
- Land area size, parcelization and ownership
- Topography
- Circulation system and access
- Utilities and capacities
- Public services
- Environmental conditions such as winds, natural features such as hills, solar exposure, view orientation, water bodies, drainage and noise exposure
- Cultural and historical resources such as historically significant buildings

- Railroad activities
- Transit
- Pedestrian and bike paths and travel distances
- Imagability of the area

The analysis of the physical and environmental elements was given in terms of potentials, or area attributes, which could be enhanced through the Development Plan, and constraints, or limitations which must be recognized and effectively addressed. These potentials and constraints are graphically summarized in Figures 58 and 59. The key findings are listed below: (Also see Issues/Directions Charrette Report 1)

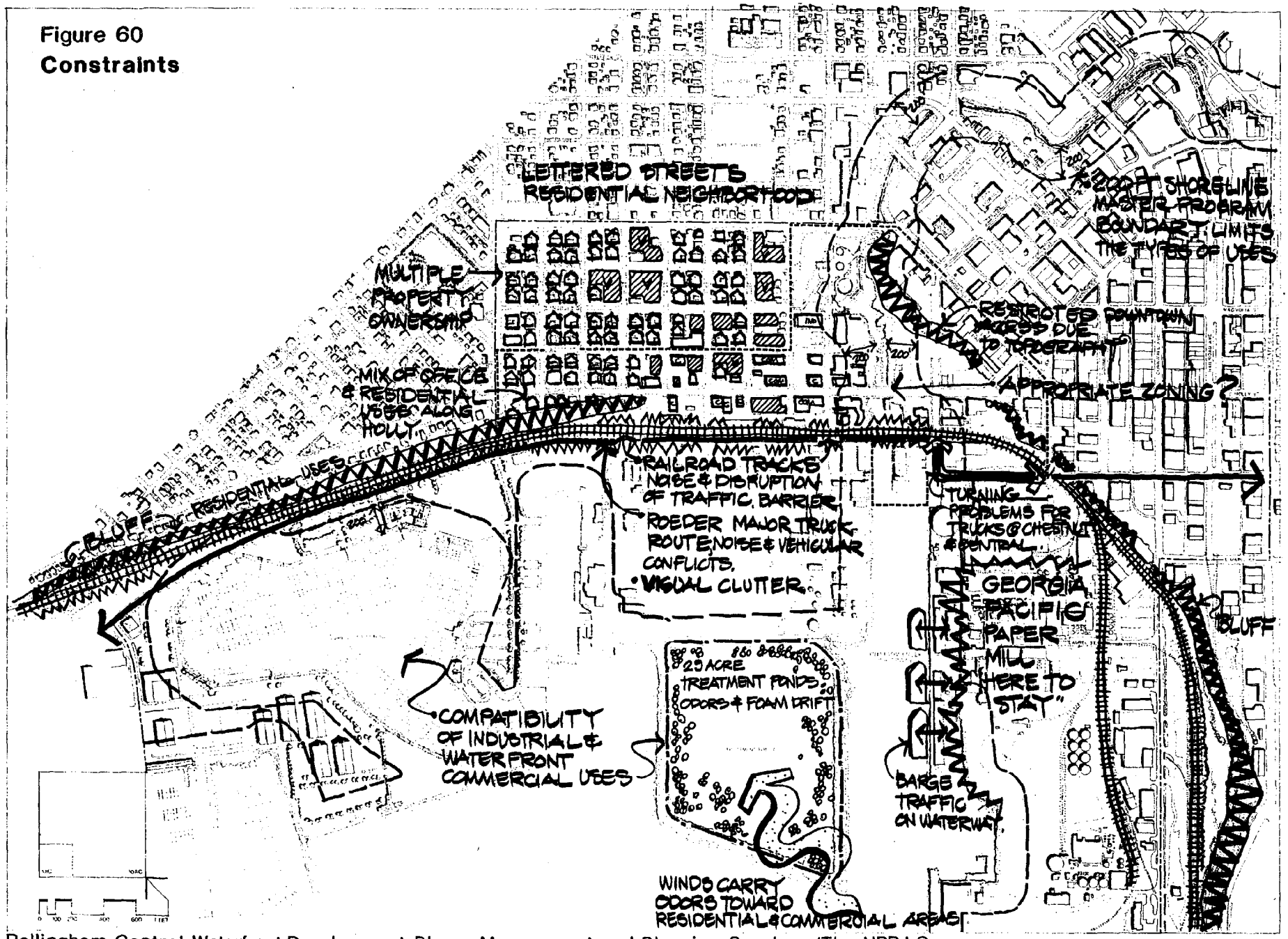
- The Target Area is approximately 63 acres in land area of which 26 acres is within public right-of-ways.
- The Influence Area which includes the CBD, the Government Center, the Lettered Streets Neighborhood, Squalicum Harbor, and the Georgia-Pacific Mill act together to create a framework in which planning will occur.
- The Central Waterfront Target Area is the "missing link" between the CBD and Squalicum Harbor.
- Views are primarily to the south and west from the upland areas and up and down along street right-of-ways within the Target Area.
- The Maritime Heritage Center is a major amenity and public focus for education and recreation in the area.
- Whatcom Creek is a significant water feature that divides the area, is open space, and is controlled from flooding.
- Water frontage is mostly along Whatcom Creek not Bellingham Bay.
- The Whatcom County Museum and Bay Buildings are prominent as landmarks, visual organizing elements.

Figure 59
Potentials



Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Figure 60
Constraints



- The existing image of the area is of marginal uses, visual clutter caused by outdoor storage, signage, and utilities.
- Historic Citizens Dock is a landmark but is in poor condition and might be moved.
- The Target Area reflects the junction of the different platting and street patterns.
- Blocks vary in size and shape due to the platting and grid network.
- The Target Area is compact in size being 3,500 feet long by between 500 and 1,300 feet wide.
- The area reflects a use mix diversity with compatibility conflicts.
- The Whatcom Creek Waterway exhibits a high level of water dependent industrial activity.
- The area exhibits a coarse grain development pattern due to the industrial type buildings, vacant parcels, and lack of street edge definition.
- The area has a number of multiple ownerships with several large holdings; some with large undeveloped parcels.
- The existing utility systems are capable of supporting new development.
- Upland access to the CBD is restricted due to topography.
- Topography subdivides the Target Area.
- The primary arterials of Holly, Roeder, and "F" Street establish the circulation structure.
- The Chestnut Street re-alignment will improve circulation.

- The railroad tracks and operations create a barrier at "F", "C", and Central Streets.

- There is good areawide access to I-5 via Lakeway Drive and Squalicum Parkway. Lakeway Drive to the east is the primary City gateway.

- Walking distance and time is convenient within the area. However, the distance between CBD and Squalicum Harbor is excessive.

- There is unrestricted on-street parking in the area. Industrial uses spill-over into public right-of-way.

- Primary arterials define edges of the study area. These include Dupont, Prospect, Bay, Broadway and Roeder.

- Prevailing winds are from the south-southwest during much of the year. This causes odors from the Georgia-Pacific treatment pond to blow on shore toward the Lettered Street Neighborhood and CBD where most complaints are registered. Occasionally during winter months winds will blow from the south-southeast which could impact portions of Squalicum Harbor with odors from the ponds.

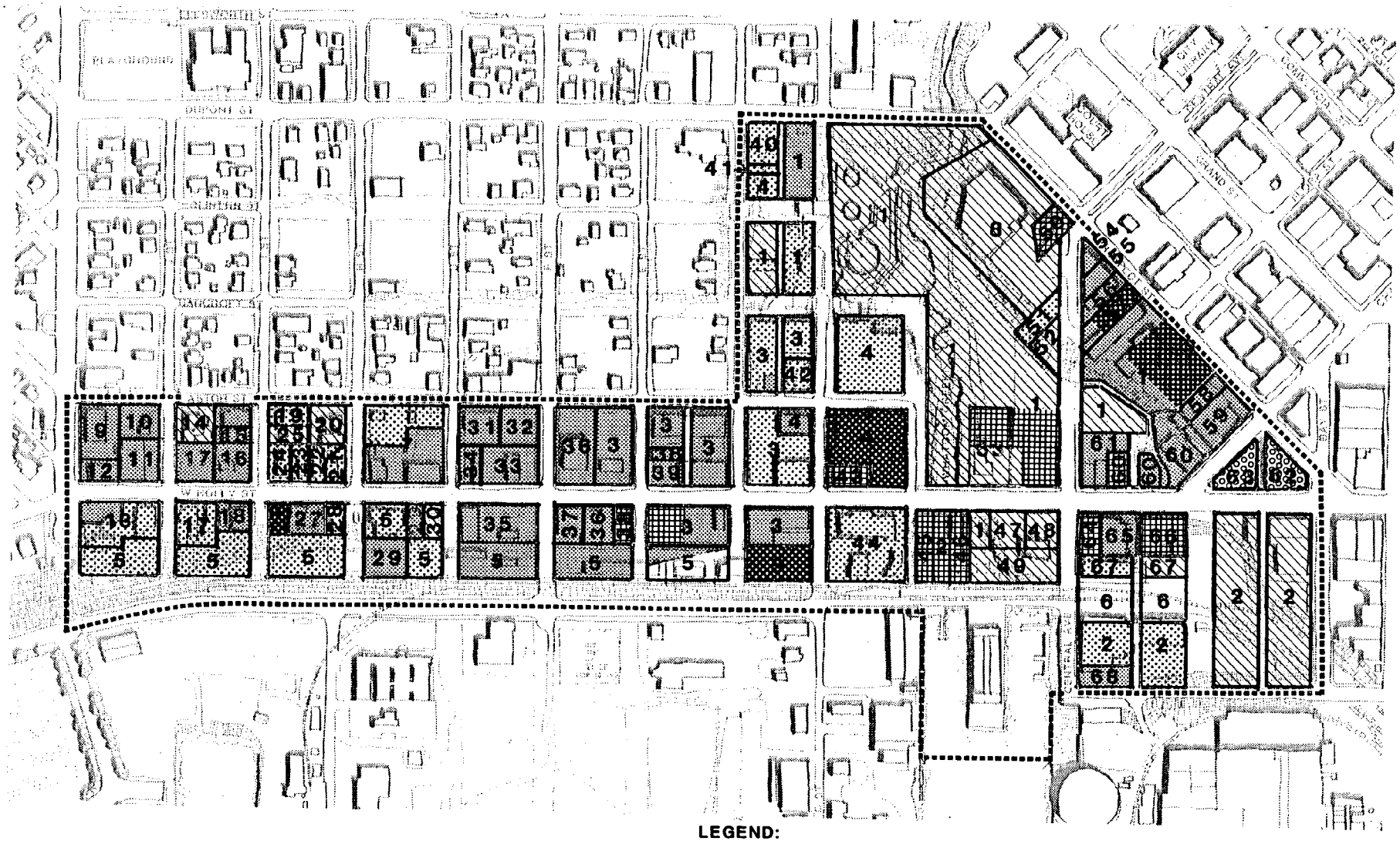


Figure 61

Land Value

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

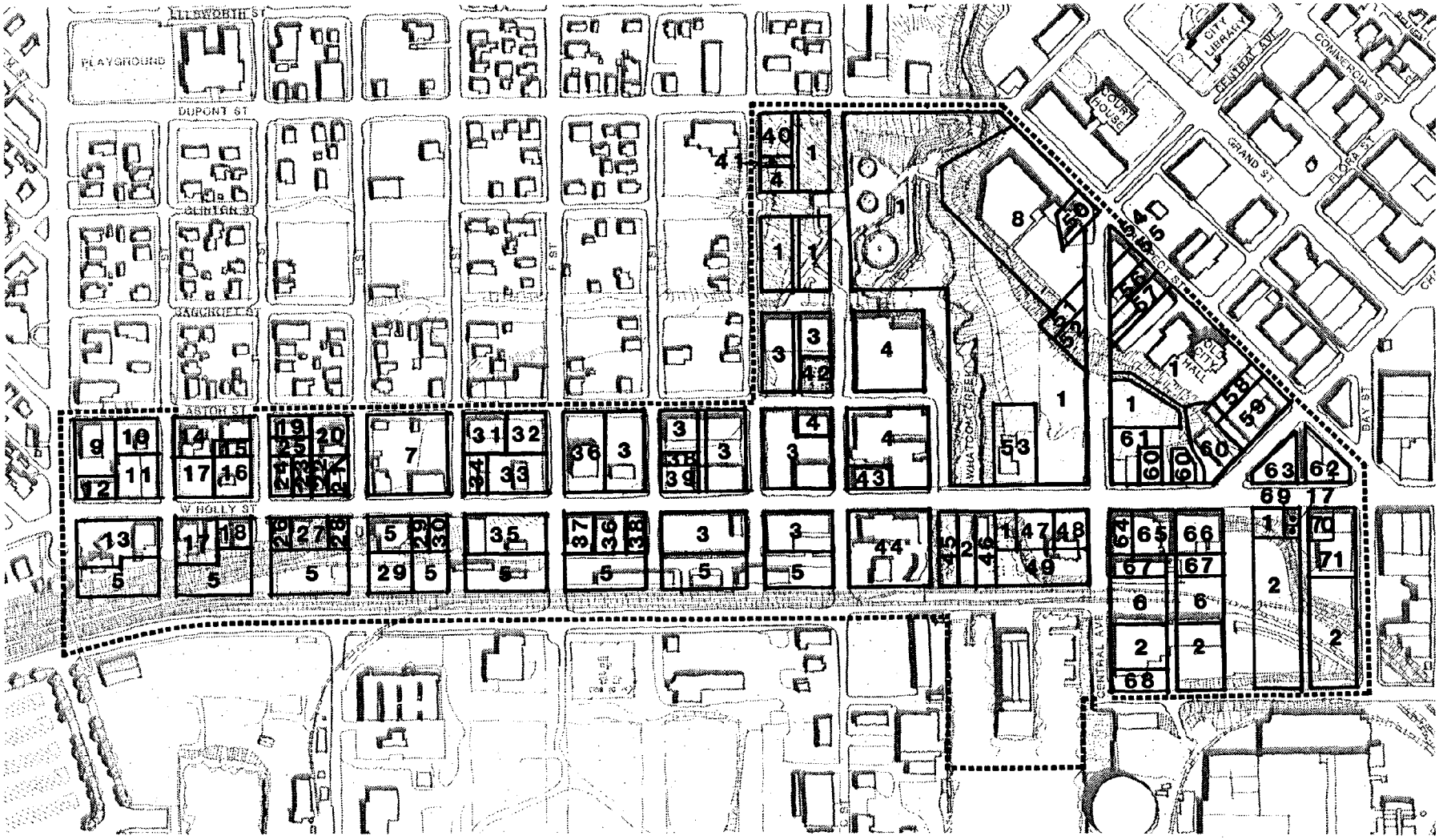


Figure 62

Ownership (See Legend on Facing Page)

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Ownership Legend:

1. City of Bellingham
2. Georgia Pacific
3. Parberry
4. B'ham Sash & Door
5. Great Northern RR
6. Burlington Northern
7. D. L. Gordon
8. Ester & Diamond
9. Apeland
10. Northwest Consultants
11. Mitchell & Wittren
12. Westford
13. Kapoor
14. Akers
15. Church of Divine Man, Inc.
16. Dawson & Bornstein
17. McElroy
18. Beecher & Fihd, Inc.
19. Hanson
20. Lenard Cords
21. Vaughan-Pope
22. Bruton
23. Leenstra & Kelstrup
24. Hason & Kohler
25. Moreau & Cole
26. Rosellini, Wactrip, Smith & Miller
27. Holly Venture Partnership
28. Wilcox & Schrimsher
29. Holly Street Professional Building
30. Jr. Chamber of Commerce
31. Edith Branlund
32. Hal Jr. & Hal III Arnason
33. Yorkstrom
34. Dennis Beeman
35. Schenk & Darberry
36. Light House Mission
37. Lydia Krassen
38. Carl Akers
39. NW Recycling Inc.
40. Eleanor Gravem & Laura Clarke
41. Legal Center
42. Puget Sound Power and Light
43. Craig Smith
44. McMillan & Rogers Inv.
45. Huggins, Thomas & Taggart
46. Barada
47. Whatcom County
48. Commerce Land Co.
49. State of Washington
50. Meadow Lake Building Co.
51. John Kinghard
52. Peach & Hindman
53. Roger Whittaker
54. G.S. Graham
55. Hindman Peach & Razore
56. Gallery Partners
57. Cascade Laundry Co.
58. Marie Kappel
59. Prospect Mall Building
60. Clinton Sands
61. G.A.L. Corp.
62. Hal Arnason
63. Tiscormia & Bertolotti
64. Wistoski
65. Salvation Army
66. Paul Pace
67. Waterfront Alley
68. Myer Bornstein
69. Rietman
70. Muljat
71. Thornberg

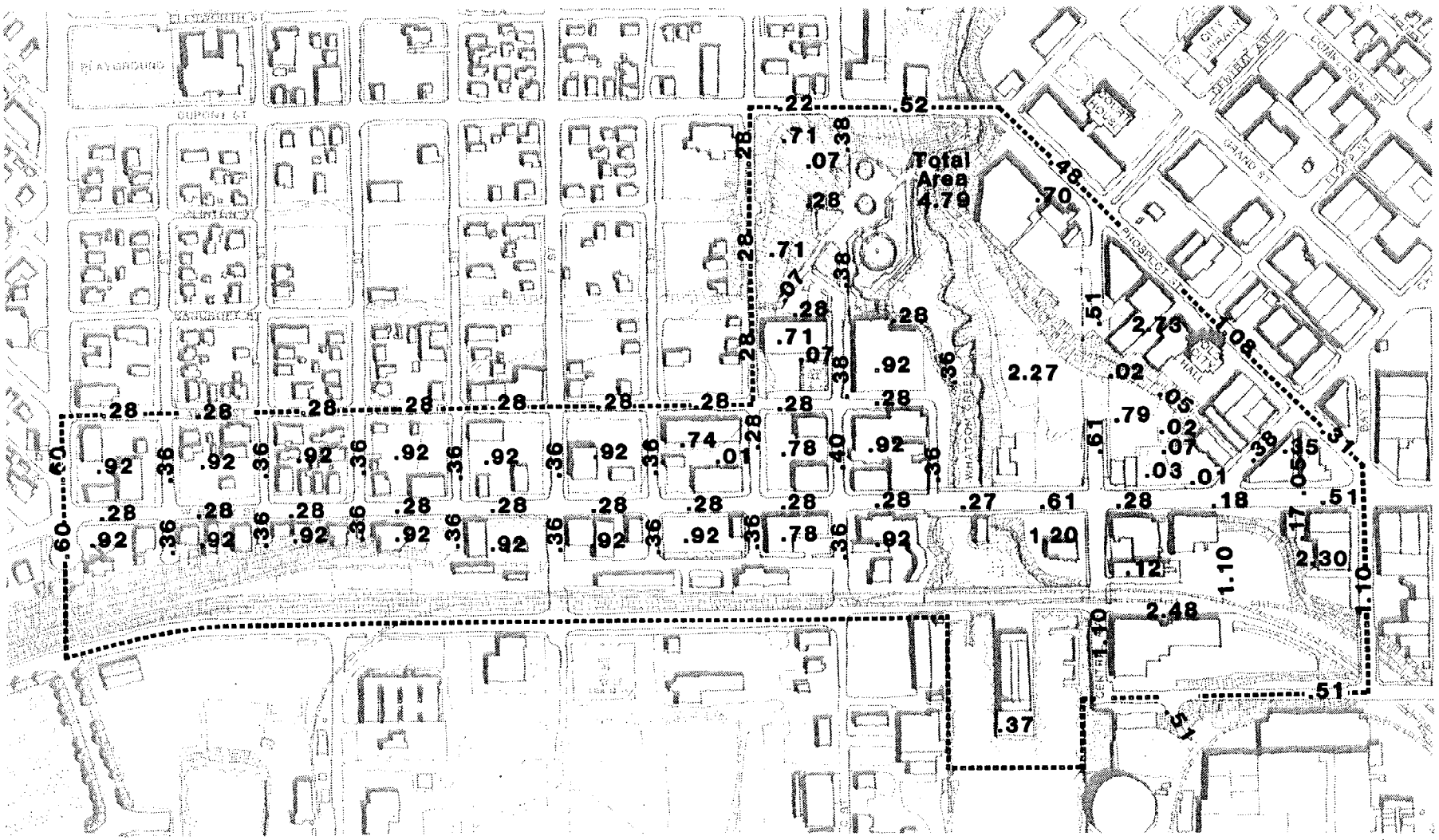
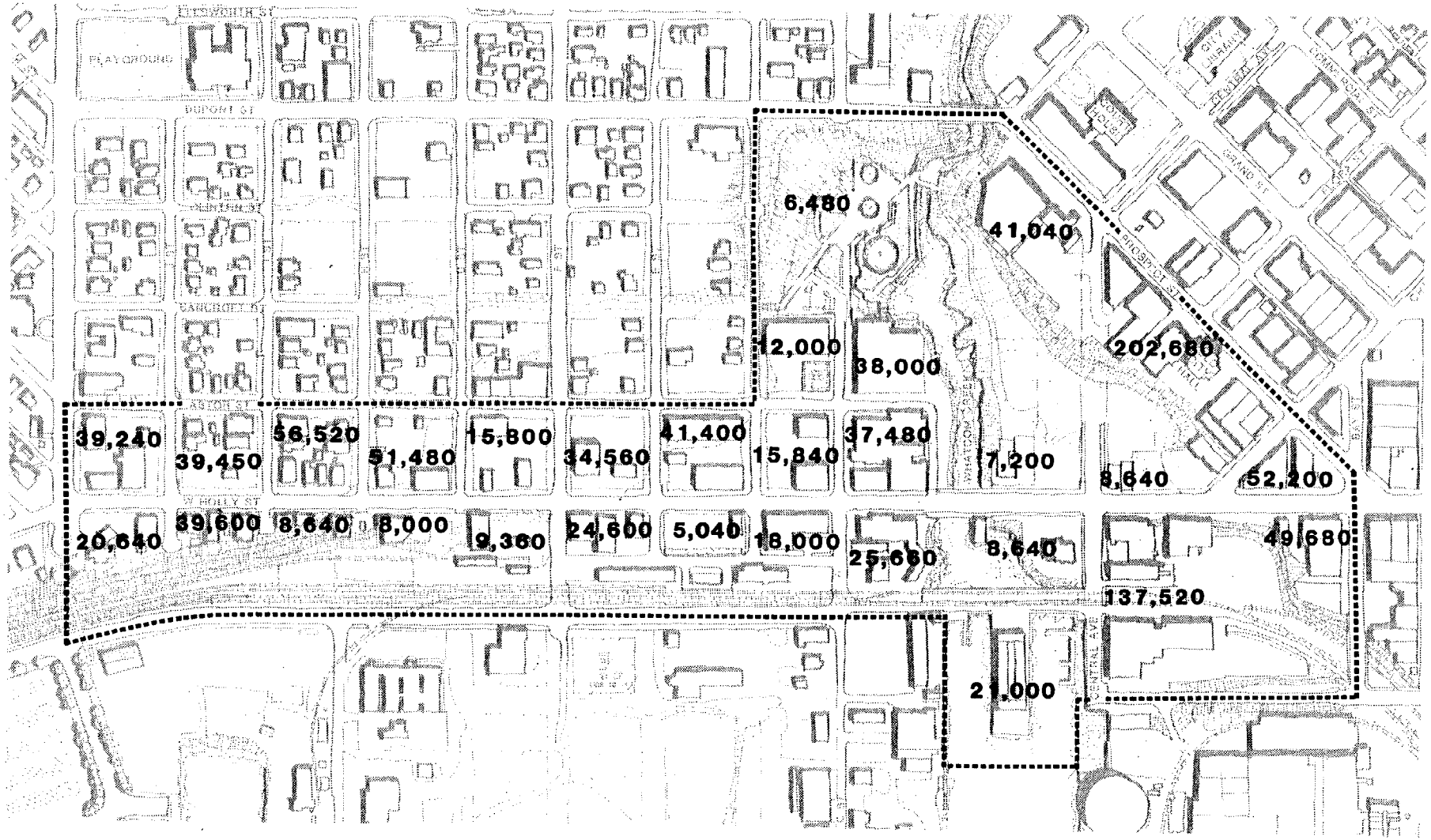


Figure 63

Land Areas

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group



NOTE
- Individual Building Areas are Agregrated by Block
- Area of All Structures Including Covered Storage

0 100 500FT

Figure 64

Existing Building Areas

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

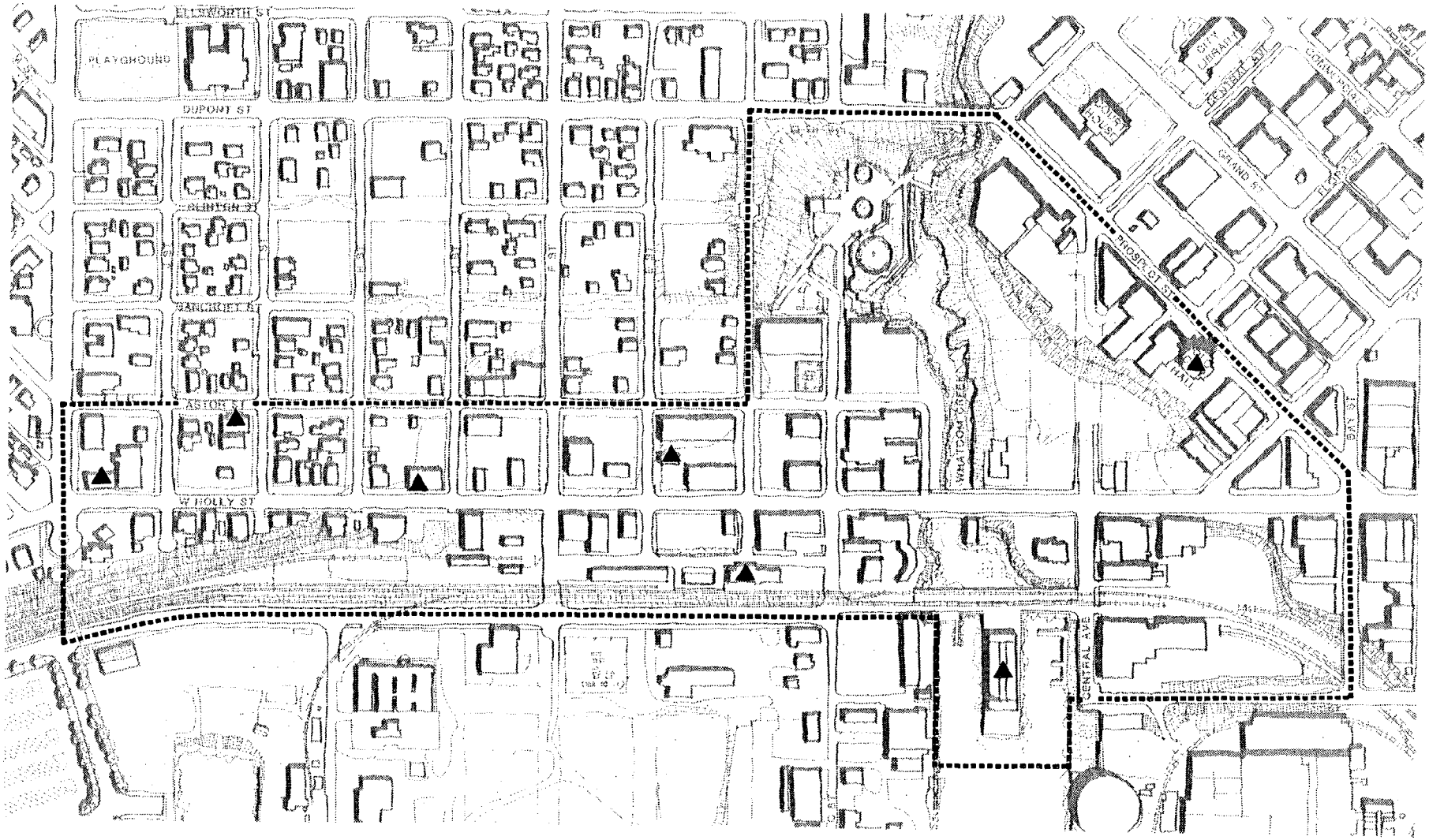


Figure 65

Historically Significant Buildings

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

REGULATORY ASSESSMENT

In addition to the physical and environmental analysis of the study area, a regulatory assessment was conducted to evaluate the land use controls and how they affect redevelopment. The following regulatory controls were reviewed:

- Bellingham Comprehensive Plan
- Land Use Development Ordinance of the City of Bellingham
- City of Bellingham's Shoreline Management Master Program
- City of Bellingham Specifications and Standard Plans Department of Public Works
- Northwest Air Pollution Authority Regulations

The key findings of the regulatory assessment are listed below. (Also see Issues/Directions Charrette Report 1)

Bellingham Plan and Land Use Development Ordinance

- The Central Waterfront area contains portions of the Bellingham Plan's CBD and Lettered Streets zoning districts.
- The Target Area currently contains the following zoning designations.

Central Business District
- Area 6: Civic Center
- Area 10: Central Commercial
- Area 14: Waterfront Commercial
- Area 15: Heavy Industrial

Lettered Streets Neighborhood
- Area 8: Residential-Multi/Multiple, Mixed (offices allowed)
- Area 9: Residential-Multi/Multiple or Planned
- Area 10: Waterfront Commercial
- Area 11: Public

- The maximum height limit of buildings within the area zoned Waterfront Commercial is three stories or 35 feet.

- The maximum height limit within the Lettered Street Neighborhood Area 8 is 45 feet and 35 feet in Area 9.

- The Waterfront Commercial designation currently limits the types of retail businesses to those which are water-related.

- The Waterfront Commercial designation allows the following uses:

  - Eating and Drinking Establishment
  - Dance Halls
  - Theatres
  - Offices
  - Hotels and Motels
  - Aquariums and Nautical Museums
  - Art Galleries and Studios
  - Water-related Retail Uses
  - Second-hand Surplus or Antique Stores
  - Groceries
  - Public Utilities
  - Marinas
  - Public Parks
  - Parking Facilities
  - Boat Building
  - Web Houses
  - Fish Processing
  - Handicraft Manufacturing

- The Waterfront Use Qualifier is intended to revitalize the historic waterfront areas with a people-oriented marine use atmosphere . The intent is to reserve property abutting and/or in close proximity to the shoreline for commercial, light industrial, and recreational activities which depend upon or traditionally related to the waterfront, or to those uses which will lend or help support a marine-type atmosphere.

- The Central Commercial designation of properties uphill from the Central Waterfront is intended to accommodate a broad range of goods and services located within the City's dominate commercial center.

- The industrial designations are intended to reserve land exclusively for industrial and industrial-related uses. In order to lessen traffic congestion, industrial areas should be located in areas with direct accessibility to arterials, railroads, or saltwater transportation systems.

- The Heavy Industrial Use qualifier is intended to accommodate uses which may create a higher degree of hazard or annoyance than those permitted in any other land use classification. Certain uses such as residential and retail businesses are not permitted in order to ensure that heavy industries locate in areas where their operation will either be injurious to nor hindered by those uses.

- The Lettered Streets Neighborhood Area 9 is intended to provide a mix of multi-family residential uses as well as office uses. Residential densities are based on 1,500 square feet of lot area per residential unit requirement. This is currently the highest density allowed in Bellingham.

- The Lettered Streets Areas 8 and 9 recognize the importance of preserving older historic houses in the area.

- Conversions of existing housing to duplexes is allowed in Area 9 of the Lettered Streets.

- Parking requirements are as follow:

  Heavy Industrial
  - Manufacturing: 1/5,000 gsf or 1/employee
  - Warehousing/Wholesaling: 1/20,000 gsf or 1/employee

  Commercial
  - Office: 1/350 gsf
  - Restaurant: 1/75 sf of floor area
  - Publicly accessible

  Residential Multi-Family
  - 1 space/studio unit
  - 1.5 spaces/2 bedroom unit
  - 2 spaces/3+ bedroom unit
  - Compact car allowance up to 40% of spaces
  - Residential units with 5 or more units are required to add 1 space for every 30 units of handicapped parking

Shoreline Management Master Program

- The Target Area is located within the Urban I designation of the Bellingham Shoreline Management Master Program. The intent of the Urban I designation is to provide areas for intense shoreline development which enhances the shoreline and its aesthetic attributes.

- A 25 foot building setback from the high water mark is required.

- Development along shoreline must have a Shoreline Management Substantial Development permit from the City.

- Residential uses over the water are prohibited.

- The Urban I designation does not prohibit any uses outside the 25 foot setback. All types of commercial uses are allowed.

The assessment of the regulatory controls indicated the following problems:

- There currently exist a number of non-conforming uses within the Waterfront Commercial zone that existed prior to the adoption of the Bellingham Plan. These retail businesses cannot expand or move within the area zoned Waterfront Commercial unless their retail operations are water-related.

- Although the Waterfront Commercial designation is intended to reserve property abutting and/or in closer proximity to the shoreline for water-related uses, the vast majority of the property within the Central Waterfront Target Area does not relate to the water, and the creek is not navigable past the Roeder Street Bridge.

- The Multi-Residential Mixed Use area of the Lettered Streets Neighborhood Area 8 contains a number of large vacant parcels which have not developed in part due to density and open space requirements of the Plan. It was felt that reducing the amount of land area per residential unit and allowing for open space fees to be paid to improvements at the Maritime Heritage Center Park in lieu of providing on-site open space might provide the incentive for new Mixed Use Residential development in this area. An attempt to correct some of these inherent problems in the zoning of the area has been made as part of the recommendations in the Development Plan.

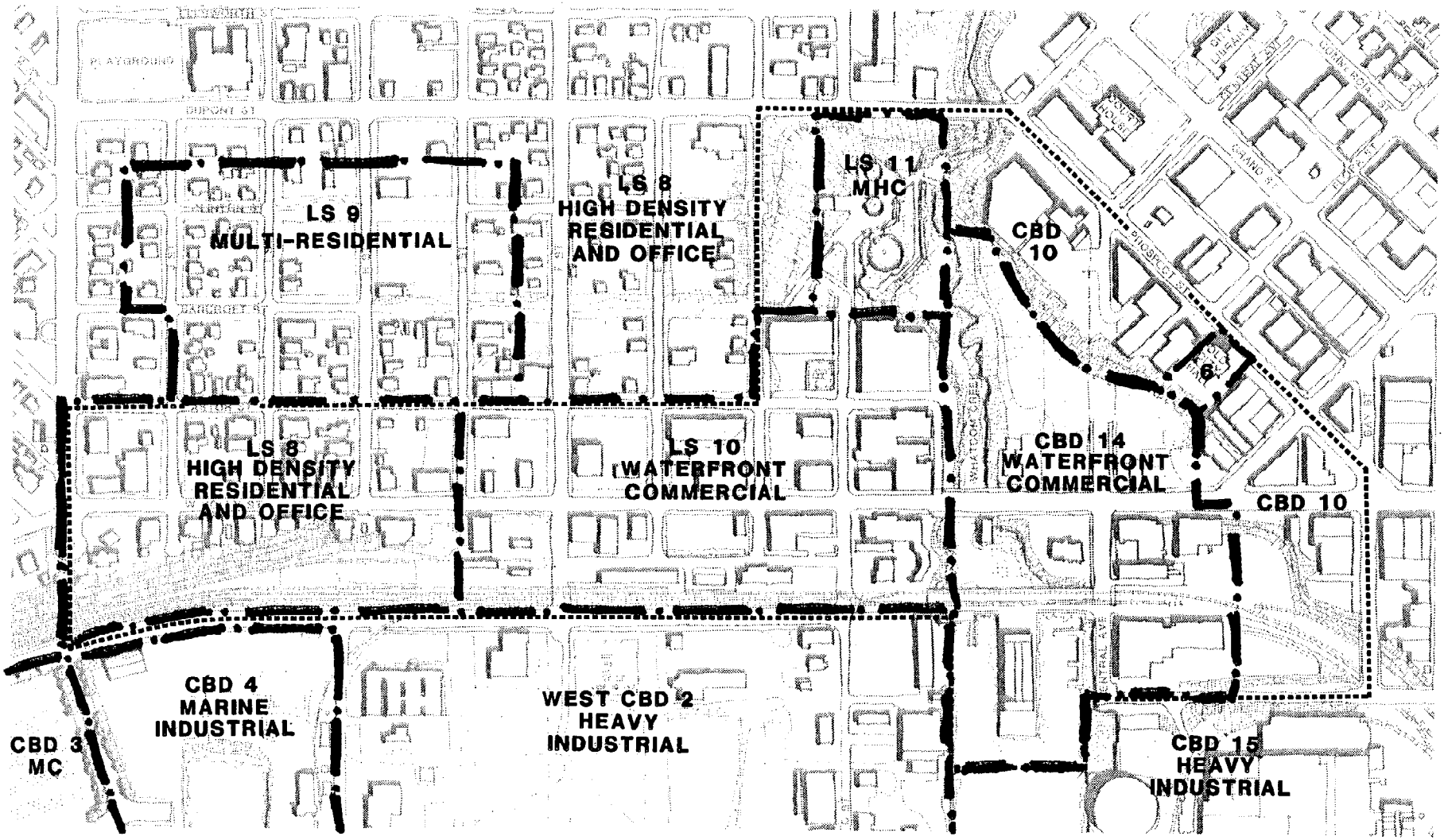


Figure 66
Zoning

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

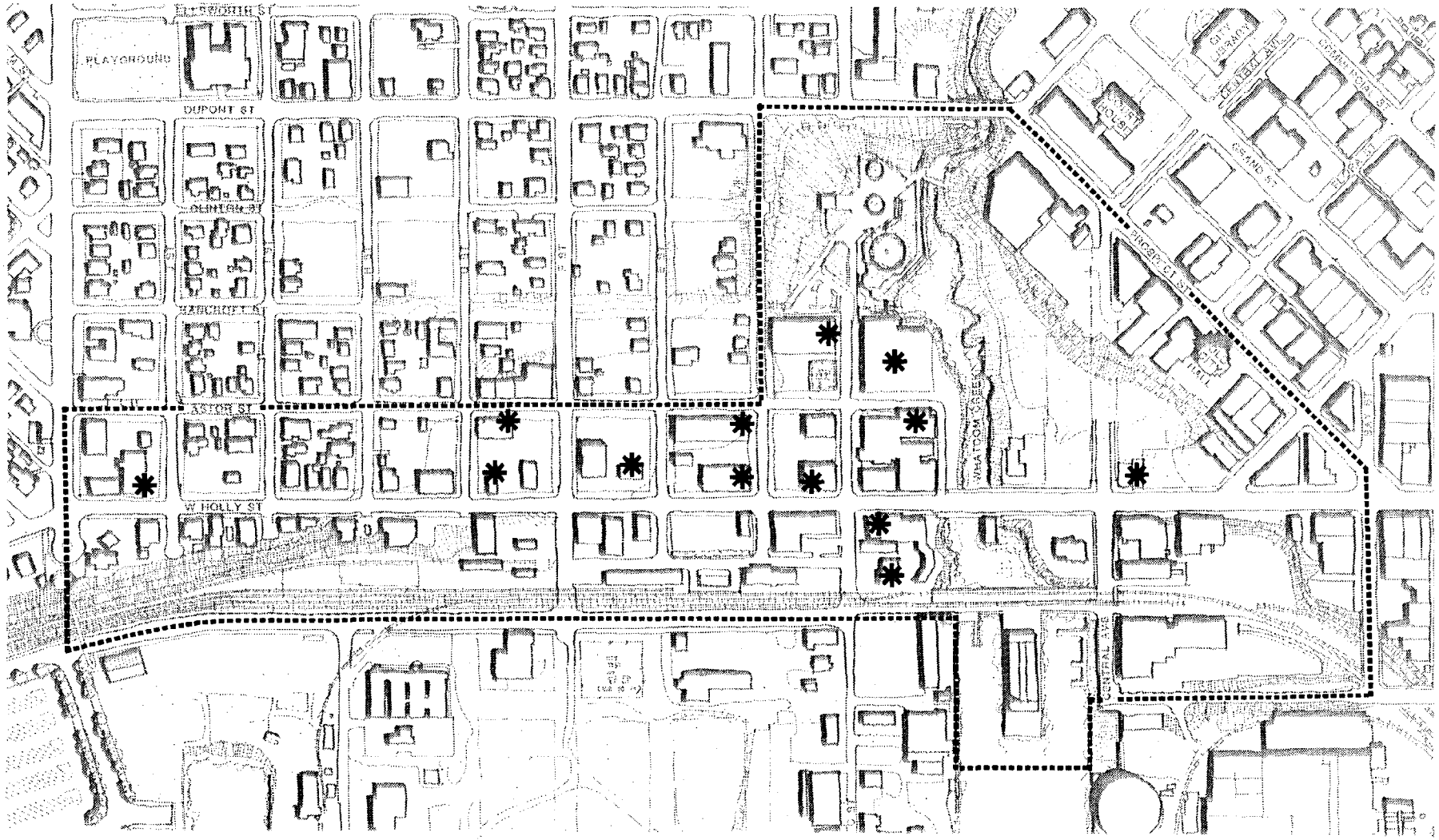


Figure 67

Non-Conforming Uses

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

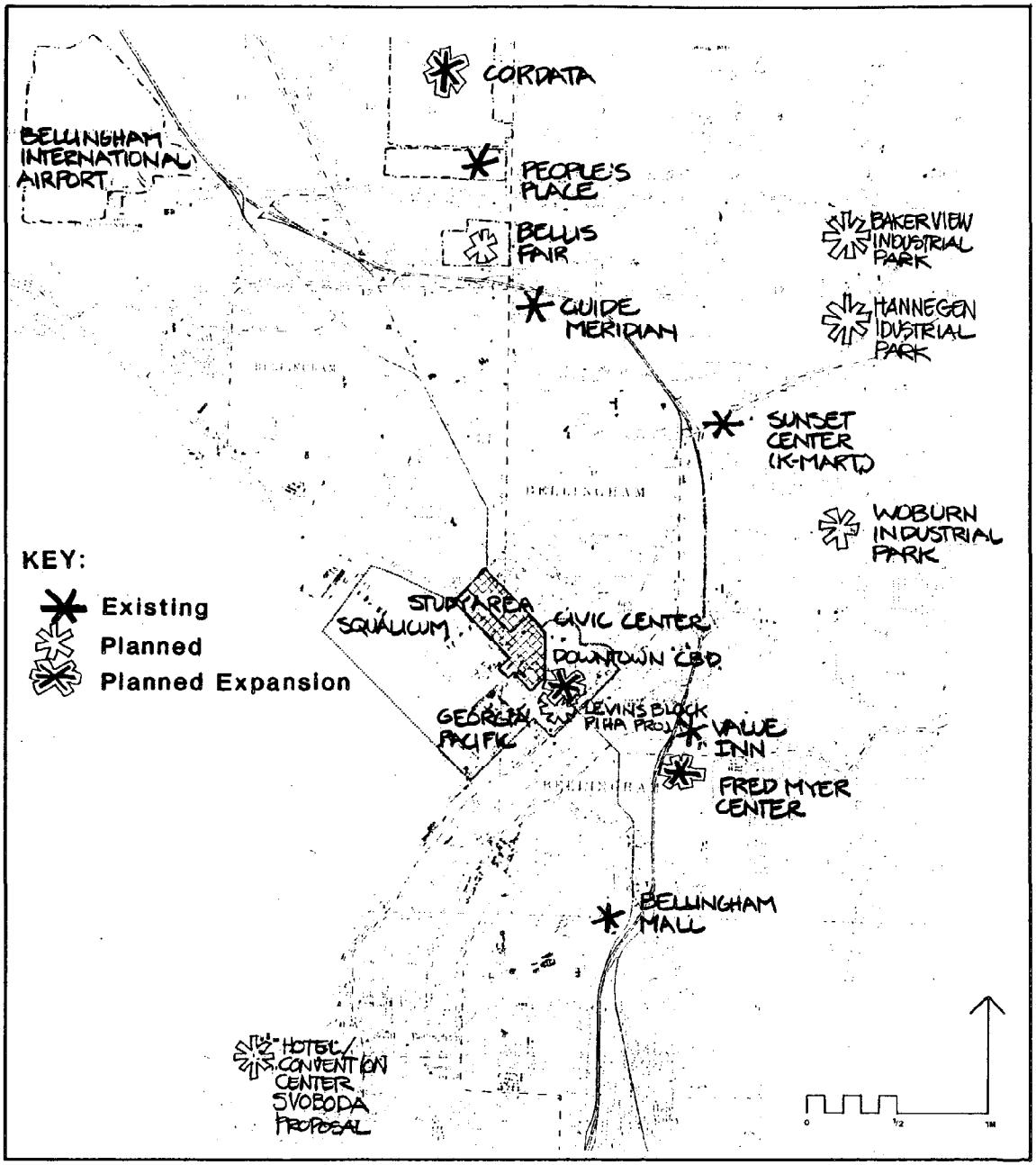


Figure 68
Market Area

COMMERCIAL MARKET ANALYSIS

Introduction/Methodology

To determine the economic feasibility of commercial development in the Bellingham Waterfront area, a socio-economic and commercial market analysis was undertaken. The purpose of the market analysis was to identify and describe potential alternate uses for the waterfront area and to forecast the future demand for those uses. The study involved an analysis of Whatcom County generally and Bellingham specifically. Figure 68 shows the study area and adjacent commercial projects (existing, planned, and existing with planned expansion).

The following four kinds of commercial properties were examined:

- Office
- Retail
- Hotel/Motel
- Industrial

Each of these development types was surveyed to determine the amount of development and location of:

- Existing space
- Major commercial projects under construction
- Major development projects planned in the near future

The methods used to compile the data included: personal and/or telephone interviews with key local real estate, planning, and economic professionals, and review of secondary data sources.

Interviews were held in Bellingham with representatives from the following private companies and public entities:

- Coldwell Banker/Miller Real Estate, Inc.
- Kelstrup Realtors
- Intergroup Inc.
- The Trillum Corporation
- Bellingham Chamber of Commerce
- Whatcom County Council of Governments
- Bellingham/Whatcom County Visitor and Convention Bureau
- City of Bellingham Planning and Economic Development Department
- Whatcom County Real Estate Research Committee
- Western Washington University
- Equity Investments Business Department
- Port of Bellingham
- Ticor Title

Listed below are the major written data sources used for the market and socio-economic analysis:

- Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, 1979-82, 1984-1985
- Bellingham/Whatcom County Total Taxable Retail Sales 1977-1984
- Fourth Corner Development Group - Community Profile, 1985-1986
- Southport Market Feasibility Study, 1984
- Bellis Fair Regional Mall - Draft EIS, 1985
- SRI - Industrial and Business Opportunities for Whatcom County, 1983
- Canadian Impact Study - Whatcom County Council of Governments, 1978
- City of Bellingham Annual Financial Report, 1984
- The Economic Future of Whatcom County - Whatcom County Council of Governments, 1983
- Whatcom County Population Projections (1980-2000)
  - *Whatcom County Council of Governments*
- Whatcom County Economic Fact Sheet - Bellingham Chamber of Commerce

- Employment Statistics - Washington State Employment Security (local office) 1981-1985
  - Employment/unemployment
  - Wage surveys
  - Employment projections by occupation
- Bellingham Herald Annual Economic Report

Whatcom County was defined as the relevant market area. In addition, the influence of Canadian spending was considered for its implications for development along the waterfront. Study conclusions are based on:

- General economic conditions in Whatcom County, Bellingham, and Washington State
- Specific determinants of demand for each use
- Competitive supply of similar uses
- Market share and potential absorption over time

All development types were considered for the waterfront except residential development. The industrial character of the area combined with a soft residential market makes residential development less likely along the waterfront than other uses.

Demographic and Economic Trends

A review of demographic and economic trends establised the context in which development in the Bellingham area, and the Central Waterfront would take place. Historical conditions provided a basis for forecasting future conditions. Both historical and future conditions were used in forecasting the type and quantity of commercial space demand.

As noted earlier, the study involved a socio-economic analysis of the greater geographic area beginning with the Whatcom County area and culminating with the City of Bellingham.

Population

Whatcom County grew more rapidly (2.7%) than the entire State (1.9%) between 1970 - 1980 as shown in Table 1. The majority of the growth was in areas outside the City of Bellingham. The growth rate for the Vancouver Metropolitan area over the approximate time was 2.4% per annum, which was greater than the State, but lower than Whatcom County.

TABLE 1 COMPARISON OF POPULATION GROWTH RATES
Whatcom County, Bellingham, Washington State and Vancouver, B.C.

	1960	1970	1980	1970-1980 Growth Rate Cumulative	1970-1980 Growth Rate Average Annual
Whatcom County	70,317	81,893	106,701	30.3%	2.7%
Bellingham	34,688	39,375	45,794	16.3%	1.5%
Whatcom County minus Bellingham	35,629	42,518	60,907	43.3%	3.7%
Washington State	2,853,214	3,413,244	4,132,180	21.1%	1.9%
	1961	1971	1981	1971-1981 Growth Rate	
Vancouver, B.C. Metropolitan Area[1]	826,626	1,082,201	1,366,368	24%	

[1] Comprised of Greater Vancouver, Langley (City and Municipality), Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Statistics Canada; Squalicum Harbor Market Analysis.

Table 2 compares the population growth rates of the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County and the State from 1980 to 1985. As shown in the preceding table, Whatcom County continued to show higher growth rates than either the City of Bellingham or the State during the period, with the largest increases being maintained in the areas outside the City of Bellingham.

TABLE 2 EXISTING POPULATION
City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, and Washington State

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1980-1985 Growth Rate Cumulative	1980-1985 Growth Rate Average Annual
Whatcom County	106,701	109,900	111,100	112,100	113,700	119,000	11.5%	2.2%
City of Bellingham	45,794	46,400	45,950	45,900	46,010	50,600	10.5%	2.0%
Whatcom County minus Bellingham	60,907	63,500	65,150	66,200	67,690	68,400	12.3%	2.3%
Washington State	4,132,180	4,226,600	4,264,000	4,285,100	4,328,100	4,384,100	6.1%	1.2%

Source: Forecasts of the State Population by Age and Sex 1986-2010, Office of Financial Management, December 1985; Whatcom County Council of Governments Fact Sheet, Whatcom County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 1985-1986.

The most recent forecast of population by the Whatcom County Council of Governments (Table 3: Forecast Population) shows an average yearly growth rate of 1.9% for the County and 1.4% for the City of Bellingham through the year 2000. Those rates compare to 1.2% for the State over the same time period. Once again, the greater growth rate is expected to be in areas outside of the City of Bellingham.

TABLE 3 FORECAST POPULATION
City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, and Washington State

	1985	1990	1995	2000	1985-2000 Growth Rate: Cumulative	1985-2000 Growth Rate: Average Annual
Whatcom County	119,000	132,000	144,200	156,700	31.7%	1.9%
City of Bellingham	50,641	55,069	58,947	62,041	22.5%	1.4%
Whatcom County minus Bellingham	68,359	76,931	85,253	94,659	38.5%	2.2%
Washington State	4,384,100	4,640,465	4,941,013	5,249,387	19.7%	1.2%

Source: Forecasts of the State Population by Age and Sex 1986-2010, Office of Financial Management, December 1985; Whatcom County Council of Governments Economic Fact Sheet, Management and Planning Services calculations.

Employment

In the decade from 1970 and 1980, employment in Whatcom County increased cumulatively 40% with an annual average of 3.6% as seen below. The unemployment rate for the same time period increased from 8.5% to over 10%.

TABLE 4 EMPLOYMENT IN WHATCOM COUNTY

				Growth Rate			
				1970-1980		1976-1980	
	1970	1976	1980	Cumulative	Average Annual	Cumulative	Average Annual
Total Employment	30,920	37,950	44,100	42.3%	3.6%	15.9%	3.8%
Total Unemployment	2,890	4,230	4,980	72.3%	5.6%	17.7%	4.2%
(Percent Unemployed)	(8.5)	(10.0)	(10.2)	-	-	-	-

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, 1982 Annual Planning Report-Bellingham SMSA (Table 4), Management and Planning Services calculations.

The 1980-85 employment rates for both the County and the City of Bellingham showed a decrease during the recession years of 1980 and 1981 and an upturn beginning in 1983 and continuing to the present.

TABLE 5 EMPLOYMENT IN WHATCOM COUNTY AND THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1980-1985 Growth Rate Cumulative	1980-1985 Growth Rate Average Annual
Total Employment								
Whatcom County	44,100	42,400	43,200	45,700	44,900	48,400	10.0%	1.9%
Bellingham	21,740	20,900	21,300	22,530	22,140	23,860	9.8%	1.9%
Percent Unemployment								
Whatcom County	10.2	11.9	12.9	12.1	10.9	9.2	-	-
Bellingham	10.8	12.5	13.6	12.8	11.5	9.7	-	-

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, Research and Analysis Division, February 1986 (Table 4), Management and Planning Services calculations.

The average annual population growth rate for the County and the City during the first half of the decade (1980-1985) was of 1.9%, which is over 50% lower than the rate experienced in the preceding years 1976-1980. Unemployment figures for the County and Bellingham increased from 10.2% and 10.8% in 1980 to 12.9% and 13.6%, respectively, in 1982. This compared to national figures of 7.9% and 11.0% in those specific years. The post recessionary recovery in the early 1980's resulted in a decrease in the average annual County and Bellingham unemployment rates from 12.5% in 1983 to 9.5% in 1985.

Table 6, on the following page, shows the employment trends in Whatcom County from 1975 to 1984. The Whatcom County employment base contains several resource related industries. The two major resource-based industries in the County are agriculture (e.g. dairy, poultry and vegetable/berry production) and food processing. Whatcom County has ranked either first or second in the entire nation in dairy production in recent years. Commercial fishing and related industries (e.g. processing and cold storage) as well as forestry and related products serve as key job producers in Whatcom County. Overall, total nonagricultural employment showed an equal growth rate between 1975 and 1984. Reflecting the trends in the nation at large, the highest rates of employment growth have been in the services, wholesale/retail trade, finance, insurance, and real estate categories. The wholesale and retail trade sector has employed the largest number of workers from 1975 to 1984.

TABLE 6

WHATCOM COUNTY HISTORIC EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR, 1975–1984

	1975		1976		1977		1978		1979		1980		1981		1982		1983		1984	
	Jobs	(%)*	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)	Jobs	(%)
Total Employment	36,220	(100)	38,800	(100)	40,400	(100)	42,250	(100)	44,680	(100)	44,000	(100)	42,300	(100)	42,400	(100)	45,340	(100)	44,900	(100)
Total Agriculture/Self Emp./Involved in Labor-Management Disputes	6,340	(17.5)	7,140	(18.3)	6,730	(16.6)	7,320	(17.3)	8,170	(18.3)	7,840	(17.8)	6,860	(16.2)	7,300	(17.2)	9,050	(20.0)	7,930	(17.7)
Total Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Workers	29,880	(82.5)	31,660	(81.4)	33,670	(83.2)	34,930	(82.4)	36,510	(81.7)	36,160	(82.2)	35,440	(83.8)	35,100	(82.8)	36,300	(80.1)	36,980	(82.4)
Total Manufacturing	6,410	(17.8)	6,830	(17.6)	6,740	(16.6)	6,600	(15.6)	7,320	(16.4)	7,250	(16.5)	7,080	(16.7)	7,000	(16.5)	6,830	(15.1)	6,760	(15.1)
Total Durable	3,030	(8.4)	3,140	(8.1)	3,120	(7.7)	2,810	(6.6)	3,590	(8.0)	3,430	(7.8)	3,330	(7.9)	3,280	(7.7)	3,000	(6.8)	3,190	(7.1)
Total Nondurable	3,380	(9.3)	3,690	(9.5)	3,620	(8.9)	3,790	(8.9)	3,730	(8.4)	3,820	(8.7)	3,750	(8.6)	3,720	(8.7)	3,750	(8.3)	3,570	(8.0)
Mining/Miscellaneous	**340	(0.9)	**340	(0.9)	390	(1.0)	280	(0.7)	280	(0.6)	300	(0.6)	300	(0.7)	230	(0.5)	100	(0.2)	90	(0.2)
Construction	1,810	(5.0)	1,960	(5.0)	2,220	(5.5)	2,460	(5.8)	2,620	(5.9)	2,040	(4.6)	1,850	(4.4)	1,590	(3.7)	1,740	(3.8)	1,730	(3.9)
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	1,780	(4.9)	1,740	(4.5)	1,820	(4.5)	1,970	(4.6)	2,100	(4.7)	2,060	(4.7)	1,650	(3.9)	1,570	(3.7)	1,660	(3.7)	1,660	(3.7)
Wholesale/Retail Trade	6,980	(19.3)	7,890	(20.3)	8,620	(21.3)	9,210	(21.5)	9,550	(21.4)	9,140	(20.7)	9,270	(21.9)	9,390	(22.1)	9,890	(21.8)	10,140	(22.6)
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	1,060	(2.9)	1,170	(3.0)	1,340	(3.3)	1,400	(3.5)	1,540	(3.4)	1,470	(3.3)	1,560	(3.7)	1,450	(3.4)	1,410	(3.1)	1,410	(3.1)
Services	5,050	(13.9)	5,430	(14.0)	5,830	(14.4)	6,200	(14.6)	6,180	(13.8)	6,580	(14.9)	6,610	(15.6)	6,900	(16.2)	7,440	(16.4)	7,350	(16.4)
Government	6,450	(17.8)	6,500	(16.7)	6,710	(16.6)	6,820	(16.1)	6,920	(15.5)	7,320	(16.6)	7,120	(16.8)	6,970	(16.4)	7,230	(15.9)	7,840	(17.5)

*Means % of total employment.
**Forestry and fishing were included in this category for these years.

Sources: Washington State Employment Security Department, March 1983. All values are annual averages.
Bob Plue, Seattle Office, Washington State Employment Security Department, March 6, 1985 (Conversation) 1983 and 1984 Statistics

The following table lists the top 10 employers in Whatcom County for 1985 and 1986.

TABLE 7 TOP TEN EMPLOYERS IN WHATCOM COUNTY

		1985 Employees[1]	1986 Employees[1]
1.	INTALCO	1,238	1,214
2.	Western Washington University	1,070	1,071
3.	Georgia-Pacific	946	984
4.	Bellingham Schools	775	801
5.	City of Bellingham	502	529
6.	Whatcom County	512	504
7.	ARCO	428	431
8.	Federal Government	400	418
9.	St. Joseph Hospital	322	340
10.	St. Luke's Hospital	324	334

[1] Employment stated as full-time equivalents (FTEs)

Source: Bellingham Herald, March 4, 1986

The latest employment forecasts (June 1986) for Whatcom County show a stability in the employment rate through 1987.

TABLE 8 EMPLOYMENT FORECAST - WHATCOM COUNTY

	1985	1986	1987
Total	48,400	47,300	48,300
Unemployment Rate	9.2%	9.4%	9.4%

Source: Employment Security Department, Demographic Information Report for Whatcom County, Table 2B due to be released in July 1986.

Personal Income

Table 9, on the following page, summarizes historical and forecast growth in effective buying income for Whatcom County and the State. Effective buying income is basically defined as per household income available after taxes. It is calculated by the "Sales and Marketing Management Data Service."

Overall growth in effective buying income has been modestly higher in Whatcom County than averages observed for the State of Washington, especially in the years between 1978 and 1982. In contrast, the median buying income per household from 1980 to 1982 was 1.5% to 13% lower than the State household averages and is projected to be 23% lower in 1987.

TABLE 9 EFFECTIVE BUYING INCOME TRENDS

Year	Washington		Whatcom County	
	Total	Per Household	Total	Per Household
1978	$23,434,436	$15,738	$ 605,588	$15,938
1979	$27,078,090	$17,656	$ 712,586	$18,019
1980	$31,079,904	$19,417	$ 862,840	$19,088
1981	$36,188,966	$20,600	$ 951,538	$20,300
1982	$40,312,059	$22,315	$ 982,953	$19,740
1987 (Projected)	$76,927,997	$41,520	$1,539,817	$33,601
COMPOUND AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE				
1978-1982	12.0%	9.1%	12.9%	5.5%
1982-1987	13.8%	9.4%	9.4%	11.2%

Source: Sales and Marketing Management's "Survey of Buying Power", "Data Service", Southport Market Feasibility Study, 1985.

Retail Sales

The following table summarizes historical growth in total retail sales.

TABLE 10 TAXABLE RETAIL SALES ($000's)

	Whatcom County	Bellingham	Washington State
1980	$603,961	$361,588	$1,199,522
1981	636,722	381,278	1,235,716
1982	672,466	424,685	1,533,925
1983	747,956	460,706	1,869,254
1984	751,668	466,462	2,003,787
	COMPOUND AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATES		
1980-82	5.5%	8.4%	17.1%
1982-84	5.7%	4.8%	14.3%

Source: Washington State Department of Revenue, Research and Analysis, March 1986; Fact Sheet, Whatcom County Chamber of Commerce and Industry, March 1985; Management and Planning Services calculations.

Growth in retail sales for Whatcom County and Bellingham have been below overall State averages in the period from 1980 and 1984. This may have been due to several factors, among them the slight economic downturn in key non-services industries such as lumber and fisheries and a decrease in Canadian spending, upon which the County and cities have become increasingly dependent.

The increased dependence on Canadian spending in the Whatcom County economy was highlighted in the Canadian Impact Study (CIS) prepared by the Whatcom County Council of Governments in 1978. The CIS research team estimated that nearly one-third of all retail sales in the County were due to Canadians. More current estimates are not available, although it was felt by individuals interviewed during the course of this study that the level of general spending by Canadians has decreased from past levels because of disfavorable exchange rates.

The CIS analysis cited the following reasons why Canadians shop in Whatcom County, specifically in Bellingham:

- 47% - low prices
- 32% - good selection
- 8% - close to Canada

It was estimated in a current study (Bellis Fair Draft EIS, January 1985) that 61% of Canadians visiting the United States had come for shopping. Of the 61%, 65% had come to shop in Bellingham. The table below lists southbound border crossings at Blaine.

TABLE 11 SOUTHBOUND BORDER CROSSINGS AT BLAINE, WASHINGTON

1981	1982	1983	1984
7,593	6,790	7,853	7,100

Source: United States Customs, Southport Market Feasibility Analysis

As shown, border crossing decreased by 6.5% from 1981 to 1984. Much of the decrease in southbound crossing and therefore Canadian spending and investment can be attributed to the decrease in value of the Canadian dollar from the early seventies to the present. Table 12: Average Monthly Exchange Rate on the following page lists the historical value of the Canadian dollar from 1973 to 1984. The exchange rate for Canadian to U.S. dollars is currently around 70.50 (29.5% discount). The declining Canadian dollar has had an adverse affect on retail sales and Canadian land investments in Whatcom County.

TABLE 12 AVERAGE MONTHLY EXCHANGE RATE (%)
Canada/United States, 1973-1983

Month	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
January	100.09	100.87	100.52	99.36	98.92	90.92	82.50	84.50	82.25	82.50	80.00
February	100.45	102.39	99.95	100.63	97.29	89.83	82.25	85.25	81.94	80.75	79.75
March	100.34	102.88	99.97	101.44	95.14	88.84	83.00	84.25	82.50	80.50	80.00
April	99.94	103.30	98.90	101.70	95.14	89.60	85.00	80.50	82.50	80.25	79.75
May	99.95	103.94	97.67	102.04	95.37	89.37	86.25	82.00	81.75	79.50	79.75
June	100.17	103.48	97.42	102.71	94.56	89.16	84.00	85.50	81.50	77.00	79.25
July	100.06	102.45	97.02	102.06	94.25	88.93	84.10	85.25	81.00	76.50	79.50
August	99.62	102.06	96.59	101.49	93.03	87.69	84.10	85.00	79.50	78.25	79.00
Sept.	99.20	101.39	97.45	102.56	93.17	85.74	84.70	84.25	81.50	79.75	79.50
October	99.91	101.73	97.45	102.82	91.01	84.55	83.25	84.00	81.50	79.75	79.75
November	100.12	101.30	98.64	101.45	90.16	85.27	83.50	82.92	82.75	80.25	79.50
December	100.06	101.20	98.64	98.16	91.14	84.78	84.25	82.08	82.50	79.25	78.25

Source: Bellingham National Bank

Commercial Office Space Survey Findings

Current Market Conditions

Based on the most recent Whatcom County Real Estate Research Committee survey (Fall of 1985), the metropolitan Bellingham area can be subdivided into the following 17 tracts or geographic market areas as shown in Table 13: Bellingham Area Census Tracts and Figure 69: Census Tracts - City of Bellingham.

TABLE 13 BELLINGHAM AREA CENSUS TRACTS

Tract	Area
1	Mount Baker
2	Bellingham Airport
3	Birchwood
4	Columbia Cornwall Park
5	Lettered Streets/Sunnyland/York
6	Central Business District
7	Roosevelt
8	Alabama Hill/Silver Beach
8	North Shore
8	South Shore
9	Puget/Whatcom Falls/Samish
10	Sehome/WWU
11	Fairhaven/South Hill
11	Edgemoor
12a	Happy Valley South
12b	Lake Samish
12c	Chuckanut

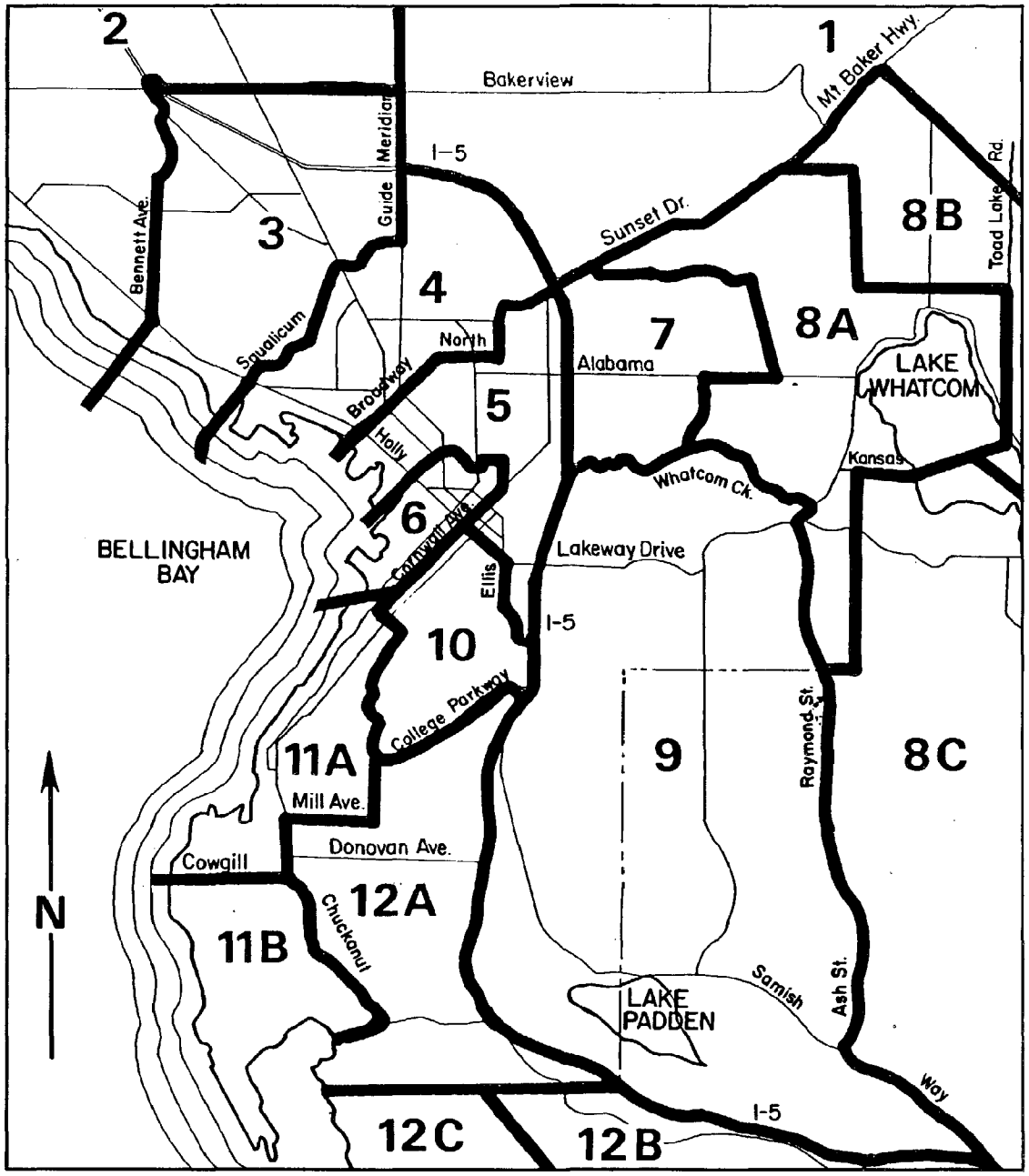


Figure 69
Census Tracts
City of Bellingham

The Target Area of our study is contained within census areas numbers 5 and 6. Refer to Figure 68: Market Area for existing, under-construction, and planned projects.

Table 14, on the following page, summarizes the results of the 1985 survey. Historical data on the office market is contained in Table 15. Historically the downtown fringe was the principal area for office development from 1977 to 1981, as evidenced by an annual absorption of about 25,000 square feet per year. Overall, annual absorption from 1977 to 1982 averaged approximately 41,000 square feet a year. Areawide occupancy of Bellingham office space during the same time period averaged around 85%. The downtown/CBD area currently contains approximately 44% of the total stock followed by the downtown fringe and other areas, with 33% and 23%, respectively. It should be noted that a sizeable amount of office space listed as being in the downtown fringe in the Whatcom County Real Estate Report is actually considered to be part of the CBD, specifically the area south of Cornwall Avenue and east of Holly Street. Also, space attributable to conversions of single-family residences to office space may or may not be included in the office survey information.

Due to a soft commercial market, the overall occupancy rate for office space has decreased from just under 85% in 1982 to about 82%. The overall annual absorption decreased from approximately 41,000 sf/year in 1982 to just under 10,000 sf in 1985, a 76% decrease. A total of four new buildings were built from 1980 to 1985, as compared to 19 in the period from 1977 to 1982.

During this period (1980-1985), one new building was built in the CBD. The majority of the new office construction occurred in the highest area of historic absorptions, the downtown fringe (two buildings).

TABLE 14
1985 BELLINGHAM OFFICE SPACE
Existing Stock and Development Between 1980 and 1985

	1985 Bellingham Commercial Office Space					Space Built Between 1980 - 1985			
	Number of Buildings	Total Net Sq. Ft.	Average Sq. Ft.	Average Age	Average Occupancy	Number of Buildings	Total Net Sq. Ft.	Average Sq. Ft.	Average Age
Downtown (CBD)[1]	14	255,876	18,277	38.8	68.8%	1	3,420	3,420	2.5
Downtown Fringe[2]	22	192,277	8,740	20.7	94.7%	2	39,300	19,650	5
Other Areas[3]	18	136,980	7,610	6.3	82.1%	1	6,836	6,836[4]	4
Total	54	585,133	10,836	21.9	81.9%	4	49,556	7,476	3.8

	Average Annual Sq.Ft. Absorption in the Last 5 Years	Average Annual Absorption as % of Current Total Stock
Downtown	684	0.1
Downtown Fringe	7,860	1.3
Other	1,367	.2
Total	9,911	1.6

[1] Census Tract 6.

[2] Census Tract 5.

[3] Census Tracts 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10.

[4] Average based on one building because square footage of 2 new buildings were not available.

Source: Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, Volume 7, 1985, pp. 52-55.

TABLE 15
1982 BELLINGHAM OFFICE SPACE
1982 Stock and Development Between 1977 and 1982

	1982 Bellingham Commercial Office Space					Space Built Between 1977 and 1982			
	Number of Buildings	Total Net Sq. Ft.	Average Sq. Ft.	Average Age	Average Occupancy	Number of Buildings	Total Net Sq. Ft.	Average Sq. Ft.	Average Age
Downtown (CBD)[1]	9	191,179	21,242	44.1	84.2%	1	17,600	17,600	2.0
Downtown Fringe[2]	20	187,763	9,388	14.1	91.4%	9	123,678	13,742	2.3
Other Areas[3]	14	133,308	9,522	4.1	78.7%	9	63,776	7,972[4]	2.8
Total	43	512,250	11,912	17.1	84.8%	19	205,054	10,792	2.5

	Average Annual Sq.Ft. Absorption in the Last 5 Years	Average Annual Absorption as % of Current Total Stock
Downtown	3,500	0.7
Downtown Fringe	24,700	4.8
Other	12,750	2.5
Total	40,950	8.0

[1] Census Tract 6.

[2] Census Tract 5.

[3] Census Tracts 1, 3, 4, 9, 10.

[4] Average based on eight buildings because square footage of a new building was not available.

Source: Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, Volume 4, Spring 1982, pp. 74-75.

Projected Office Absorption/Demand

The primary office-using employment sectors had the following average annual growth rates in Whatcom County:

Employment Sector	Annual Growth Rate (%) 1970-1980	1975-1984
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	8.8	3.2
Services (e.g. accounting, legal)	8.4	4.3
Transportation, Utilities & Communications	2.9	(0.8)
Government	3.5	2.2

In all cases, growth rates for the period 1970 to 1980 were higher than those for 1975 to 1984. This indicates that employment growth in these sectors slowed substantially during the last half of the decade.

As previously mentioned, annual absorption of new office space from 1980 to 1985 averaged about 1.6% of the current stock.

Table 16 lists projected office absorption for the City of Bellingham. The forecast was based on historical absorption rates from 1980 to 1985.

TABLE 16 PROJECTED CUMULATIVE OFFICE ABSORPTION
City of Bellingham

	1986-1990	1990-1995
Downtown (CBD)	2,736	6,156
Downtown Fringe	31,440	70,740
Other Areas	5,468	49,212
	39,644	126,108

Source: Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, Volume 7, 1985, Management and Planning Services calculations

The forecasts are conservative in that they assume a continuation of recent trends. Under this assumption, the downtown fringe area, which contains most of the study Target Area, would absorb about 31,000 square feet in the next four years (1990) an additional 39,300 square feet by 1995. As noted earlier, portions of the CBD are contained within the downtown fringe area resulting in a understatement of projected demand in the CBD. One 12,000 square foot building, as proposed by the Waterfront Plan, located at the corner of Dupont and "D" Street would represent 40% of the forecast 1990 absorption and 17% of the 1995 estimated absorption. Such a capture rate could be obtained at a prime upland, high amenity (e.g. Maritime Heritage Center) site in the next five years.

Lease Rates

Rental rates for office space are primarily a function of location and prominence (e.g. central business district, suburban, etc.), and the quality of the building finishes and amenities. Table 17, on the following page, lists the lease rates for the City of Bellingham. As shown, lease rates vary greatly due to a mixture of lower- to upper-grade properties within each market area.

Projects Under Construction

No new large-scale office projects were observed under construction or mentioned during interview sessions held over the course of the study with the exception of 29,000 square feet of medical office space near St. Joseph's Hospital and a recently completed 20,000 square foot mixed-use development at Guide Meridian and I-5.

TABLE 17 BELLINGHAM COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE LEASE RATES
1985 Whatcom County Real Estate Survey

	Rental Range/Square Foot	
	Triple Net[1]	Gross[2]
Downtown (CBD)[3]	N/A	$ 5 - $12
Downtown Fringe[4]	$ 3 - $11	$ 6 - $15
Other Areas[5]	N/A	$ 8 - $14

[1] Includes base rent only.

[2] Includes base rent and operating costs such as utilities, maintenance, taxes and insurance.

[3] Census Tract 6 (see Figure 68: City of Bellingham Census Tracts)

[4] Census Tract 5

[5] Census Tracts 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10

Source: Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, Volume 7, 1985, pages 52-55

Planned Projects

Due to the current softness in the office market, no major projects are planned in the target or adjacent areas (i.e. CBD and fringe). The only exception being some planned office/mixed use developments north of the City in the Guide Meridian/Cordata areas. More specific information on these projects is not yet available. The Trillium Corporation's Cordata project is a 600-acre mixed use development which is planned to contain a 65-acre free trade zone, 1,500 single/multi-family units, 150 acres of open space and lastly 300 acres of land designed for commercial, and commercial/industrial development.

Commercial Retail Space Survey Findings

Current Market Conditions

According to the survey conducted by the Whatcom County Research Committee, there was approximately 4.3 million square feet of retail space in Bellingham and vicinity in 1985 as compared to 3.9 million and 2.5 million square feet in 1984 and 1983, respectively. The 1.4 million square foot increase in the retail area between 1983 to 1984 was due to the large addition/expansion of retail space in all of the market areas, especially the CBD (Census Tract #6), the Roosevelt area (Census Tract #7), the Lettered Streets Neighborhood (Census Tract #5), and the Bellingham Airport area (Census Tract #2). Table 18 shows the retail space distribution, by market area, for the greater Bellingham area.

TABLE 18 SURVEY OF EXISTING BELLINGHAM RETAIL SPACE

	Square Feet	Total	Occupancy Rate
Downtown (CBD)[1]	1,176,260	27%	94.0%
Downtown Fringe[2]	1,224,182	29%	97.8%
Other Areas[3]	1,862,143	44%	92.3%
Total	4,262,585		94.7%

[1] Census Tract 6.

[2] Census Tract 5.

[3] Census Tracts 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Source: Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, 1985, Volume 7, pages 56-74.

As shown in Table 19, the majority of retail space is located in the outlying areas.

Several major shopping districts or centers account for about 29% of the total retail space in Bellingham. Most of them are in freeway-oriented locations. They are listed below.

TABLE 19 MAJOR SHOPPING DISTRICTS AND CENTERS
Bellingham, Washington

	Total Retail (Sq.Ft.)	Shopper Goods Store Area (Sq.Ft.)
Bellingham CBD[1]	422,500	422,500
Fred Meyer Center	162,500	125,000
Bellingham Mall	150,000	65,000
Meridian Village	128,800	40,000
People's Place	110,000	60,000
Park Manor	100,000	25,000
Sunset Center	84,000	84,000
Fairhaven/South Hill	106,400	80,400
Total	1,264,200	901,900

[1] Square footage of retail area for CBD includes only establishments in SIC Codes 53, 56, 57 and 59.

Source: Bellis Fair Draft EIS, January, 1985, Whatcom County Real Estate Research Report, 1985, Volume 7, page 73.

The downtown CBD still is the largest single area of retail space in the City. The CBD retail market is centered around 3 major anchor stores, The Bon (53,500 sf), J. C. Penneys (45,000 sf) and Sears (35,400 sf) for a total of 133,900 square feet. Table 20 on the following page shows the growth rates of shopper goods in the CBD by Standard Industrial Code (SIC) from 1980-1984.

TABLE 20 GROWTH OF SHOPPER GOODS SALES BY SIC CODE
Downtown Bellingham, 1980-1984

	SIC Code 53	SIC Code 56	SIC Code 57	SIC Code 59	
	General Merchandise	Apparel, Accessories	Furniture/ Furnishings/ Equipment	Miscellaneous Retail Stores	Total Shopper Goods
1980	$25,258,482	$4,865,729	$2,429,554	$7,349,977	$39,903,742
1981	27,776,491	5,321,272	2,366,733	8,178,301	43,612,797
1982	28,849,096	5,389,793	2,756,261	7,724,791	44,359,941
1983	32,210,029	5,908,100	4,647,660	8,415,207	51,180,176
1984	32,803,065	6,647,749	6,352,443	8,886,601	54,689,903
Percentage Change 1980-84	29.9%	36.6%	161.5%[1]	20.9%	37.1%
Average Annual Change	7.5%	9.2%	40.4%	5.2%	9.30%

[1] Information to explain the rapid growth of volume in the "furniture" category is not available as of this writing.

Source: City of Bellingham, Bellis Fair Draft EIS, January, 1985.

The furniture/furnishings/equipment category, SIC Code 57, showed the greatest growth percentage growth (40.4% average annual). Overall average annual shopper goods increased at a rate of 9.3% over the same period demonstrating a supportive market base. In order to place the CBD's overall rate of growth in shopper goods in perspective to national trends, a comparison was made to the United States Department of Labor's Department Store Index, for the period 1979 to 1983. The Department Store Index grew at an annual rate of 5%, which is 1.8 times less than the 9.3% rate observed for the Bellingham CBD area, indicating a stronger than average market demand in retail sales for Bellingham's downtown market.

The sales volumes realized by the overall shopper goods establishment by area are shown in Table 21.

TABLE 21 SALES VOLUME OF SHOPPER GOODS PER SQUARE FOOT - 1983
City of Bellingham

	Volume ($000)	Volume/SF
Bellingham	$ 130,318	$158.63
CBD	51,180	121.14
Non-CBD	79,138	198.34

Source: City of Bellingham, Department of Revenue, State of Washington, Bellis Fair Draft EIS, January, 1985.

The actual sales per square foot for Bellingham were compared to median rates observed for regional malls in the Far West.

TABLE 22 SALES VOLUMES FOR SELECTED RETAIL CATEGORIES
Regional Malls in Far West, 1983

Store Type	Median Sales Per Square Foot	Upper Decile Sales Per Square Foot
Mall Tenant Sales	$128.18	$217.80
Department Stores (Owned)	84.08	143.28
Junior Department Store	124.52	--
Apparel:		
Ladies Ready-to-Wear	110.30[1]	--
Mens-Wear	131.55[1]	--
Ladies Specialty	136.62[1]	--

[1] Statistics compiled from regional malls for entire USA.

Source: Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, Bellis Fair Draft EIS, January, 1985.

As shown, sales per square foot for Bellingham are about 24% and 55% higher than the overall median mall sales in 1983. In contrast, sales per square foot in the Bellingham CBD area was about 5% lower than Far West mall averages.

Existing retail establishments in the Central Waterfront area are comprised of a mix of retail/wholesale establishments such as hardware, lumber, marine-related as well as second-hand and antique stores. No specialty retail businesses are currently in the Central Waterfront area.

Projects Under Construction

With the exception of some minor remodeling and a small addition at Fred Meyers and the completion of Park Manor in 1984 (100,000 sf) there have been no major additions to the retail square footages since 1978. The most recent retail projects in the Bellingham area includes:

- Meridian Village & People Place - 1978 (neighborhood shopping centers)
- K-Mart (Sunset Center) - 1976
- Fred Meyer - 1974
- Bellingham Mall - 1968

Projects Planned

Several major retail projects are planned for the greater Bellingham area and are shown in Figure 67: Market Area. They are:

Bellis Fair Regional Mall

- Located at intersection of I-5 and the Guide Meridian
- Will include a regional mall, a hotel and complementary commercial space
- Five major department stores planned with a total of 600,000 GLA of retail space plus 3,000 parking spaces on 61.5 acres
- Phase I (1986 start date)
  - 372,000 GLA
  - 3 majors
  - 37.1 acres
- Phase II (1992 start date)
  - 228,000 GLA
  - 2 majors
  - 24.4 acres
- Hotel (to be built during Phase II)
  - 220 rooms, complete with meeting facilities

- Restaurants
  - 2 freestanding establishments at 5,000 sf each

Hays Group Proposal

- Located south of the Fred Meyer Center
- 270,000 sf proposed, to include 3 majors and a 60,000 sf health club

Piha Project (Downtown CBD)

- Proposal calls for remodeling/expanding existing J.C. Penneys store from 45,000 sf to 100,000 sf
- Expand existing Bon store and add 3-story garage
- Redevelop 100,000 sf currently occupied by Levin's Department store

Sunset Center

- Proposal calls for a 350,000 sf expansion of Newman Brettin next to K-Mart
- Space includes movie theatre and 60,000 sf of retail

Of the major retail projects proposed, Bellis Fair Mall is the most significant in terms of new space added and its possible impact on the surrounding retail areas, especially the CBD. The development of Bellis Fair may reduce the feasibility of the above mentioned projects. A major result of Bellis Fair Mall may be the relocation of the major department stores from downtown to the mall. Such a move by one or more of the majors to Bellis Fair may cause the relocation of other downtown specialty and other support spaces to the mall. Specialty retailers depend heavily on the traffic generated by the major department stores, who usually serve as magnets for shoppers. The Bon has recently announced that they will open a new, 100,000 square foot store at Bellis Fair in 1988. While it is recognized that development of Bellis Fair will probably reduce retail sales in the CBD, the Bellis Fair EIS projected a net gain of retail sales of nearly 20% in the overall Bellingham area.

Restaurants

Existing Establishments

Based on information from the Bellingham and Whatcom County Visitor and Convention Bureau, there are a total of 118 restaurants, including fast food establishments in the City of Bellingham. The Target Area currently contains two mid-priced restaurants and one combination fish retailer/ snack bar. All three are located close to the Whatcom Creek Waterway. A key driver of the restaurant business is the level of disposable income in the area. Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham have historically shown higher per capita spending in the eating and drinking category than the State as a whole.

The majority of restaurants are priced in the lower to moderate price ranges. The majority of the popular (and normally more expensive) restaurants in Bellingham are those either located near the waterfront or with water views.

Under Construction and Planned Establishments

No major expansions or new restaurant facilities are currently under construction in the City of Bellingham. The only exception being some minor expansions of the Bay Cafe at Squalicum Harbor.

The GTM Corporation, owner of several restaurants in the Bellingham area, is, planning a new stand-alone higher quality restaurant at Squalicum Harbor. In contrast to the low potential for restaurants in the general study area, waterfront-oriented restaurants, as noted earlier, have traditionally been very popular and there presently exists a scarcity of such facilities along the water in Bellingham. The Squalicum Harbor and Fairhaven/Southport areas show the greatest potential for new restaurant facilities.

Hotels and Support Facilities

Existing Market Conditions

According to information from Bellingham and Whatcom County Visitors and Convention Bureau, there are a total of 21 hotel and motels in the City of Bellingham with a total of 906 rooms. Room rates range from $17-$140/night with an overall average price of $37/night. The majority of the hotel/motels are located south of downtown and west of I-5. Based on the Visitor Bureau's estimates, occupancy rates range between 60-65% during the off-season (winter) and 90-95% during the on-season (fall, spring, summer).

A telephone survey of conference facilities was conducted. The survey revealed the following conference spaces.

TABLE 23 BELLINGHAM CONFERENCE FACILITIES

Facility	Capacity (# of People)	Estimated Annual Avg. Occupancy
Holiday Inn	90- 750	80%
Sudden Valley	60- 85	70-80%[1]
Park Hotel	55- 70	50-70%
Western Washington University (WWU)	20-3,000[2]	N/A
Total	225-3,905	60-77%

[1] Weekends and some weekdays from May to August

[2] Conference must be academic in nature

The Holiday Inn is the only downtown facility large enough to accommodate moderately sized groups. As noted, WWU's facilities, the only other large facility near downtown, is not open for use by the general public.

Under Construction and Planned Projects

No hotel/motels are currently under construction in the City of Bellingham. The Val-U-Inn at I-5 and King is the newest motel in the area (completed March 1986) adding another 80 rooms to the market. Rates range from $32-$55 per night.

Two hotels are planned for the Bellingham area: a 150-room, moderate priced resort hotel at Southport. The Port of Bellingham is also considering Squalicum Harbor as a possible hotel site.

Some temporary conversions of apartments to hotels have occurred in anticipation of the increased traffic due to Expo. These conversions account for approximately 85 additional motel rooms to the area. These converted units will probably revert back to apartments after Expo is closed. No hotels/motels currently exist or are planned for the Target Area. Given the current industrial nature of much of the area, future demand for new hotels/motels would best be met along the current hospitality corridor along I-5 and water-oriented areas such as Squalicum Harbor and Fairhaven/South Port.

Industrial Space

No current survey information is available on the amount of industrial space, therefore precluding any analysis at the level done for other commercial uses. Industrial uses are substantial contributors to the economy in Whatcom County and are particularly prominent in the Target Area. Several industrial parks are planned for the greater Bellingham area located northwest of the CBD. They are as follows:

- Cordata
  - 300 acres of commercial/industrial space
- Hannegen Industrial Park

- Woburn Industrial Park
  - 80-200 acre light industrial park

In order to project future waterfront industrial development, recent Puget Sound Marine Institute information was analyzed. The Institute traced urban shoreline industrial development over time. Table 24: Industrial Usage of Bellingham's Shoreline shows the analysis findings. Several sectors increased their shoreline use of over the 20 years from 1962-1982. Those industries are as follows:

- Construction
- Retail Trade
- Services
- Government

Retail trades had the largest increase (6 x's) of all the uses. Those showing a decline were:

- Forestry, fishing and agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Transportation and Communications

Wholesale trade remained unchanged over the time period. Manufacturing showed the largest decrease of any industry going from about a 39% share of the total waterfront uses in 1962 to 17% in 1982. The industrial trends in Bellingham are indicative of both the regional (i.e. Puget Sound) and national trends. The trend has been the gradual replacement of heavy/light industrial uses by retail trade and services oriented uses. Industrial uses, however, still plays a major role in Bellingham's waterfront and overall economy. New commercial uses such as those at newly completed Squalicum Harbor, however, are beginning to be incorporated into the City's industrial shoreline. This trend is expected to continue into the future.

TABLE 24
INDUSTRIAL USAGE OF BELLINGHAM'S SHORELINE

Sector	1962 #	1962 Percent	1972 #	1972 Percent	1982 #	1982 Percent
Forestry, Fishing and Agriculture	-	0.00%	1	1.75%	1	1.19%
Mining	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
Primary Total	-	0.00%	-	1.85%	1	1.19%
Construction	2	3.39	3	5.26	3	3.57
Manufacturing	23	38.98	13	22.81	14	16.67
Transportation and Communication	8	13.56	9	15.79	9	10.71
Wholesale Trade	15	25.42	11	19.30	21	25.00
Secondary Total	48	81.39%	36	63.16%	47	55.95%
Retail Trade	2	3.39	6	10.53	18	21.43
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	-	0.00	1	1.75	-	0.00
Services	8	13.56	11	19.30	15	17.86
Government	1	1.69	2	3.51	3	3.57
Tertiary Total	11	18.64%	20	35.09%	36	42.86%
NEC	-	0.00	-	0.00	-	0.00
All Sectors Total	59	100.00%	57	100.00%	84	100.00%
Percent Change				3.39%		47.37%

Source: PSMI Study Inventories

Land Values

Figure 60: Land Values, shows assessed land values for the Target Area. As shown, land prices range from $1-$10/sf in the Central Waterfront area. Prices in the CBD generally range from $10-$18/sf and lastly outlying areas (e.g. Guide Meridian) range from $5-$8/sf. All price estimates are for improved land (including utilities).

Market Analysis Summary

The following summary statements can be made about the overall Bellingham real estate market.

Commercial Office

- The majority of commercial office space is centered around the downtown and fringe areas. The Target Area is contained within the fringe area.
- The office market is currently somewhat soft as evidenced by the overall occupancy rate of 82%, 69% downtown and 95% in the downtown fringe.
- No major office developments are planned or under construction except for proposed developments at Cordata.

Commercial Retail

- Most retail space is located outside of the CBD in the suburban areas and the downtown fringe.
- The overall occupancy rate remains high at 95%.
- No major projects are currently under construction.
- Major expansions and/or new projects proposed include a new 600,000 sf regional shopping center (Bellis Fair).

Restaurants

- Moderate to high quality restaurants with water views are in demand.

Hotels/Motels

- Most major hotels/motels are located south of downtown and along the I-5 corridor. No hotels are located along the waterfront.
- Occupancy levels average 60-70% year-round.
- No hotel projects are now under construction.
- Proposed projects include developments at Southport, Cordata and possibly at Squalicum Harbor.

Industrial Trends

- Major uses of urban waterfronts have gradually changed from manufacturing uses to more retail/commercial/mixed uses.
- The make-up of urban waterfronts over the last 20 years has changes with gradual replacement of heavy/light industrial-oriented uses with retail trade, services-oriented uses.

Summary Conclusions

The following potential commercial development is deemed feasible in the Bellingham Central Waterfront area:

- Small scale office development 5-15,000 square feet
- Small scale support retail development, i.e. antique and other specialty stores

Hotels and restaurants would likely have little success in the Target Area. Hotel development would be particularly risky. A medium to high quality restaurant could be successful if properly located, i.e. water-oriented. Several market areas adjacent to the Target Area would have a greater potential for commercial development, especially for hotels. They are Fairhaven/Southport and the Squalicum Harbor areas. The above market analysis findings were reviewed by key area businessmen and public officials. All parties were in basic agreement with the study's conclusions and recommendations.

BUSINESS SURVEY

In order to understand the types and needs of existing businesses in the Central Waterfront area, the City of Bellingham's Planning and Economic Development Department conducted a survey of the businesses in the area. The survey was done between March and April of 1986. A total of 70 businesss were surveyed. Interviews were not conducted with six businesses due to scheduling difficulties or owners absence. The following results are summarized and expressed as a percentage of the total responses.

1. Number of Employees (including owners)

Full-Time	1-5	68%
	6-10	15%
	11-20	9%
	> 20	8%
Part-Time	1-5	18%
	6-10	6%
	11-15	3%
	0	63%
Seasonality		21%

2. Property Ownership

Own	42%	
Lease	42%	(years remaining 1-13; average 3-1/2)
Rent	15%	

Rental Costs

$1-3/sq.ft./year	21%
$3-5/sq.ft./year	9%
> $5/sq.ft./year	6%
as a % of sales	3%
No Response	61%

Special Facilities Requirements
- Two require 3-phase power
- Two require a storage yard

Utilities Costs - average of $1.50/sq.ft./year
Range of 27¢/sq.ft./year to $9/sq.ft./year

3. Business Age

0-5 years	17%
6-10 years	16%
11-20 years	20%
over 20 years	47%

Current owner average	11.5 years
Current location average	19 years

4. Business Ownership Status

Proprietorship	42%
Partnership	16%
Corporation	42%

5. Market

City and County	70%
Tourists	6%
City Only	6%
Multi County	18%

6. Customers

Retail	68%
Wholesale	12%
Retail and Wholesale	15%
Service	5%

7. Annual Revenues

Less than $100,000	21%
$100,000-$199,000	18%
$200-$299,000	9%
$300-$399,000	11%
$400-$499,000	9%
$500-$999,000	3%
More than 1,000,000	9%
No Response	20%

8. Sales and Profit Trends

Sales Last Three Years	
Increase	50%
Decrease	12%
Constant	38%
Projected Sales	
Increase	59%
Decrease	9%
Constant	30%
Unknown	2%
Profit Last Three Years	
Increase	15%
Decrease	12%
Constant	73%

9. Bank

Rainier	5%
SeaFirst	18%
NW Commercial	29%
BNB	18%
Bank of Washington	24%
Peoples State	5%
Education Credit	1%

10. Expansion/Relocation Plans (Actual #1)

Expand with Increased Employment	6
Expand with No Additional Jobs	3
Possible Relocation	6
Possible Branch	2

11. Capital Investment

Last Five Years	
Less than $100,000	18%
$100-$300,000	6%
More than $300,000	6%
No Investment	70%
Last Year	
Less than $100,000	18%
No Investment	82%
Next Five Years	
Less than $100,000	26%
$100-$300,000	3%
No Investment	71%
Next Year	
Less than $100,000	3%
$100-$300,000	3%
No Investment	94%
Type Investments	
Building and Land	26%
Machinery/Equipment	74%

Business Problems	
Industry Trends	4
Undercapitalized	2
Customer Traffic	4
Space Needs	2
Taxes Too High	1
Parking Needed	11
Appearance	1
Economy Bad	2
A/R and Cash Flow	2
"Old Town" Name	1
Personnel	1
Competition	1
Customer Awareness	1
Bookkeeping	1
Location	1
Government Regulation	1
City Assistance	
Develop Creek/Waterfront Park	7
Improve Streets/Traffic Light	9
Waterfront Development	4
Building Rehab	5
Develop Citizens Dock	1
Change Zoning	3
Brochures	2
Promote Growth	11
Financing	1
Limit Competing Street Vendors	1
Provide Public Restrooms	1
Promote Art	1
Support Local Business	1

Location Unfavorable		
	Mission and Transients	12
	Area disrepair	3
	Parking	10
	Old Building	1
	Foot Traffic	4
	Low Visibility	2
Location Favorable		
	Common/Similar Businesses	6
	Good Traffic	13
	Central/Easy to Find	10
	Low Rent	2
	View	1
GP:	good neighbor	26
	smell bad	7
Future:	Bellingham	
	Needs Jobs	4
	Growth	17
	Downtown Faultering	4
	Promote Small Shops	1
	Slow Growth	3
	Negativism	1
Future:	Area	
	Positive	5
	Stagnant	3

Several key observations were made upon analysis of the Central Waterfront business survey. They are:

- Nearly half of all existing businesses in the area have been in operation over 20 years, signifying a significant stable business base for the area.

- About 42% own their own property while 58% either lease or rent. The number of years remaining on existing leases averages about 3.5 years.

- Rental costs range from $1-$5/sf/year (Triple Net) as compared to $3-$11/sf/year for the remaining downtown fringe area.

- Most businesses are retail in nature and rely on the local customer base (City/County).

- Annual gross revenues range from 21% at less than $100,000 to 9% who reported earnings of $1 million or more.

- Approximately 50% of the businesses reported historical and projected increases in sales. Profits, however, were reported as constant the last three years for 73% of those surveyed.

- Few business expansions or relocations were mentioned. This is in conjunction with the fact that very little capital investment has recently taken place in the area. Nor is there much planned in the near future.

- The single-most mentioned business problem was insufficient parking and the transient traffic generated by the local mission.

- The City's assistance in promoting growth was cited by most of those surveyed as being significant to the area.

- Good traffic generation was mentioned as the most desirable attribute; especially given the predominance of retail establishments in the area.

DERIVATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Based on the data collected during the Issues and Directions Charrette, a number of market-driven and physical based Land Use Alternatives were developed. The alternatives addressed a wide range of community, business, and City goals and objectives for the area. The purpose of the charrettes was to collect and synthesize input from all key community interests and to temper these with practical facts and forecasts for the near- and long-term development of the Central Waterfront Area.

The alternatives were developed so that a full range of possible Land Use actions and improvement projects could be suggested for the area. The derivation of the alternatives involved the following elements:

- Precepts
- Concept Components
- General Concepts
- Economic Development Incentives
- Identification of Opportunity Areas
- Refined Alternatives
- Evaluation of Alternatives
- Plan Directions

The first of the Concept Charrettes involved a review of the key issues, directions and suggested actions. Expressed during the first Charrette were these key issues:

- That the plan be an Implementation Plan
- Concern for the Type, Amount and Location of Land Uses
- A need for Economic Development within the area
- A need for Group Consensus for Action

Suggested Actions - Based on the Issues and Directions Charrette, the following objectives were suggested for further investigation:

- Encourage investment, not just market response
- Change or modify zoning in the area
- Protect and enhance existing businesses
- Improve Roeder and Holly Streets
- Improve the Maritime Heritage Center
- Control Nuisances such as odors
- Create land use flexibility through such things as design guidelines

The key issues and directions and the objectives suggested to remedy them were used as a basis for the development of Precepts, or general organizing principles or ideas.

Precepts

Precepts are used in different combinations to create alternative concepts and solve similar problems in different ways. The precepts for the Bellingham Central Waterfront were based on four basic areas of concern:

- Practical Considerations: Overall organizing principles common to all the concepts.
- Land Use Compatibility: Should land use compatibility be achieved through grouping of similar uses, isolation and separation or a mix of uses? Should the mix of uses be horizontally or vertically zoned? Can the differences between uses be celebrated to achieve a sense of compatibility? These are the questions asked by these precepts.

- Linkages: A major goal of the plan was a way of linking the CBD with Squalicum Harbor. The linkage is to contribute to the viability of both areas and not compete for uses.

- Development Plan: A number of levels of development actions were suggested including rehabilitation, paint-up/fix-up solutions to infill and re-development.

Participants in the General Concept Charrette review these precepts and added to the list of principles. The following are the precepts used in the development of the General Concepts for the Central Waterfront.

Practical Considerations

- Balance of practicality and imagination
- Group consensus will allow action
- Compatibility of land uses with people intensive activities
- The key is the type, location and amount of land uses
- Economic development will benefit all
- Public/private cooperation
- Economic/land use influences of the environs
- Incentives for economic development; should be more than just market response
- Flexible regulations for predictability
- Distinctive support area between CBD, Government Center, Squalicum Harbor and the Lettered Streets Neighborhood

- Juxtaposition of contrast, including diversity and blend
- Quality environment
- Whatcom Creek is the amenity
- Waterway vista and visual access
- Preserve Citizens Dock; relocation or reconstruction is acceptable
- Land assemblage should result in cooperation for mutual benefits
- Good, clear accessibility between districts, within area, and to waterfront
- Efficient vehicular movement
- Convenient parking
- Consider the vehicle travel experience in terms of perception at traffic speeds, gateways and signage
- Pedestrian amenities such as the walking and bicycle experience
- Better understanding of industry such as interpretive centers and information exchange
- The plan should assume access at other points along the bay and no public access in some areas
- The plan is not giving up access to the waterfront

Land Use Compatibility Precepts

- Grouping of similar uses and activities to achieve use compatibility
- Orientation and isolation of uses to achieve use compatibility
- Land use conflict mitigation
- Celebrate the differences; compatibility through individuality
- Buffers/Edges
  - Complete physical/visual separation
  - Separation but some connections
  - Controlled and limited separation
- Land Use Organization
  - Uses separated
  - Uses mixed; horizontal or vertical
  - Independent support uses
  - Shared support uses
- Landmarks
  - Visual prominence assists orientation
  - Location is anchor to development and movement
  - Historical image such as "old town" establishes theme

Linkage Precepts

- Linkages
  - Connection clearly defined but subordinate to places it connects
  - Uniform and continuous development
  - Corridor is more distinctive than the end points
  - Sequence of secondary activities
  - Whatcom Creek trail system is an existing linkage to be built upon
- Circulation
  - Combined modes such as vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, waterborne
  - Separated modes
  - Distinct hierarchy primary, secondary, Local
  - Uniform network
  - Roeder Avenue improvements

Development Action Precepts

- Rehabilitation such as paint-up, fixed-up, clean-up and remodel
- Infill
- New Construction and re-development
- Eliminate any undue constraints in terms of flexibility and phasing

Concept Components

Following the development of the planning precepts, eleven concept components or "building blocks" were identified and used in different combinations to create each unique concept.

- Whatcom Creek Focus: This is the "waterfront" in the Central Waterfront area. It provides open space, visual interest, fish and wildlife sanctuaries, and the historical precedence of being the original town site. The Creek and Maritime Heritage Center Salmon Life Cycle Facility along with the park, are existing public amenities that need to be protected and reinforced with other people intensive activities.

- Linkages: The primary physical linkage expressed in this component would be that between CBD and Squalicum Harbor along Holly and Roeder Streets. It is the preferred path for travelers between the two areas and should reinforce the land use activities between the areas. In addition, there was expressed a need to link the CBD and the Lettered Street Neighborhood to the Central Waterfront by way of pedestrian linkages.

- Land Use Mix: The idea here is that the Central Waterfront District has historically been and should continue to have a mix of land uses and activities including residential, commercial, industrial, cultural, recreational, and public services. However, the concern for land use compatibility suggests zones within the Central Waterfront appropriate for each use.

- Land Use Interfaces: A land use interface between the mix of uses upland of Roeder Avenue and the predominately heavy industrial uses south of Roeder was identified. The interface included the railroad tracks, the Roeder truck route, and the change in topography. A need for this interface to act as a buffer was identified in the process. Another interface identified was the one separating the upland land uses from those in the Central Waterfront. This interface runs along the "rim" of the bluff that is defined roughly by Astor, "D", Dupont, and Prospect Streets.

- Vista and Overlooks: The opportunity exists within the Central Waterfront to take advantage of a number of dramatic vistas and overviews that contribute to the overall image of the area. These include panoramic vistas from the uphill rim out toward the bay and of the CBD and overlooks into the Whatcom Creek. Views are also oriented down streets and terminated by landmarks such as "D" Street to the Old Train Depot and the view up Holly to the Church at Broadway. The museum is a prominate landmark that accents views from within the Maritime Heritage Center Park. Views down the Whatcom Creek Waterway should also be reinforced to allow for the viewing of marine industrial activities within the waterway and unique to this area.

- Gateways: Currently the sense of entry into the Central Waterfront Districts is poorly defined. The need to reorganize the transition from one area to the next was identified, as was the desire to celebrate the arrival to the Central Waterfront. To accomplish this, a number of bridges and changes in the street grids were identified as needing architectural treatments to reinforce their gateway qualities. The principle gateway was identified as the Holly Street Bridge over Whatcom Creek and at the entrance to the Maritime Heritage Center Park.

- Public Right-of-Ways: One mechanism identified as a way of improving the quality and image of the Central Waterfront was the land held as part of the public right-of-way or streets and easements. A number of street improvements were identified to contribute to the linkage and identity of the area, and street vacations to consolidate industrial land uses were recommended in the concepts and plan.

- Parcelization: The size and shape of blocks and lots within the area contribute to their appropriateness for certain land uses. A number of blocks are standard 200 foot by 200 foot square, but with no alley. This is a smaller block than those in the CBD which measure about 250 feet by 300 feet. Also, a number of triangular and irregular shaped blocks are formed by the change in street grids or the steep topographic changes.

- City-Owned Property: The City is a major property owner in the Central Waterfront. In addition to the public right-of-ways, the City has the Maritime Heritage Center Park and Salmon Life Cycle Facility property as well as Citizens Dock and a parcel along Holly Street near the bridge. The use of portions of the City-owned property through land swaps, ground leases or sale, was identified as a means of stimulating economic re-development in the area as well as providing revenue to pay for other improvements.

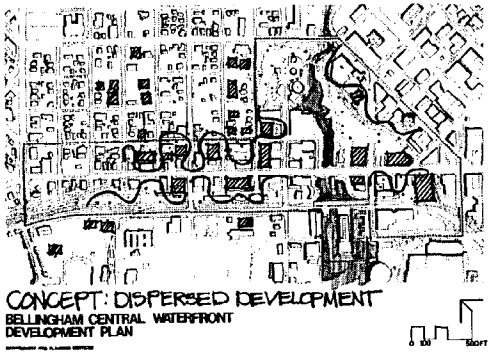
- Vacant Parcels: Another component identified as providing redevelopment potential were the number of vacant parcels or "missing teeth in the smile" of the area. Specific sites were identified as appropriate for infill development that would contribute to the street edge definition, retail continuity and general visual quality of the area. Surface parking lots and open storage yards were included in this category and guidelines were developed to require their screening or their placement to the rear of buildings.

- Zoning: Zoning was identified early on in the process as a major deterrent to redevelopment within the area. Currently a number of non-conforming uses exist within the area based on the Waterfront Commercial Zoning designation. This requires retail uses to be water-related when in fact the number of parcels with waterfront exposure is limited. Also the Creek beyond the Roeder Street Bridge is not navigable. Zoning changes that would allow non-water related retail uses in the area is suggested as a remedy. Also identified was the density requirement for residential development in the Lettered Streets Neighborhood which set a minimum lot area per unit and a percentage of the land area usage as open space. A number of large vacant parcels exist within the Influence Area above the Central Waterfront area. Reducing or eliminating these density standards and allowing payment of fees to the park in-lieu-of providing open space may be a way of encouraging increased residential development in the area.

These concept components, when used in different combinations, contributed to the development of the General Concepts.

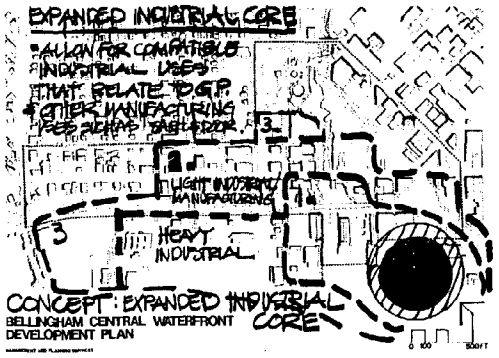
General Concepts

Based on the principles identified in the Precepts and Concept Components, six categories were defined to characterize potential land use directions for the Central Waterfront. These six General Concepts were organized around distinct land uses or emphases. Within each organizational concept a number of variations suggested themselves.



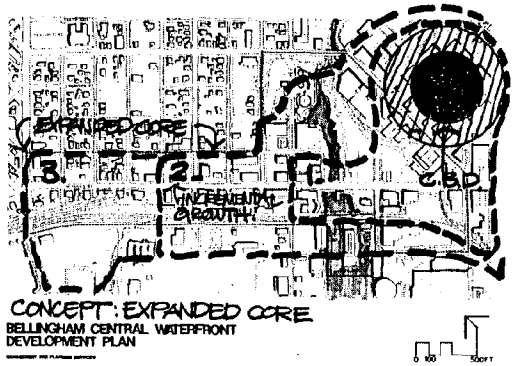
- Dispersed Development Concept: Characterized by continued independent property development on a "status-quo" basis. Emphasis is placed on the "separateness" of development and on the diversity and uniqueness of the individual parts. Linkages could or could not be used. Redevelopment activities would be of a paint-up/fix-up type and land use would continue to be a mixe of light industrial/light manufacturing uses with some retail uses being non-conforming. Another variation on this would be a multiple centers model in which a number of center of activities would exist within the area side by side.

  This would be characterized by a hierarchy of uses clustered around specific uses, and potentially link via major circulation routes and improvements. A light industrial area might be clustered around those existing like uses.



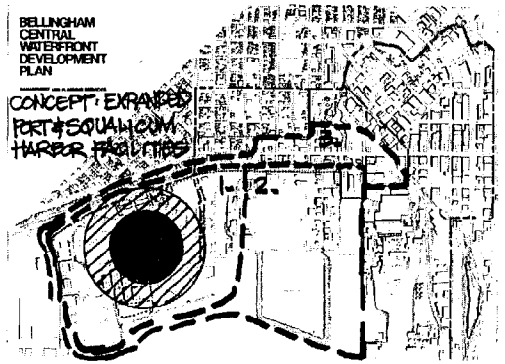
- Expanded Industrial Core: This concept recognizes the importance and permanence of the Georgia-Pacific Mill and its influence over existing nearby land uses. The land use most compatible with Georgia-Pacific would be other heavy industrial uses. These might be emphasized and expanded out from the Georgia-Pacific plant to include the majority of the area in the Central Waterfront. This could require the assemblage of larger track or blocks of land to accommodate such land intensive uses. This might be accomplished, in part, through the vacation of streets in the area in order to create larger tracks of land.

  The Maritime Heritage Center would become important as a "buffer" between these uses and the CBD and Lettered Streets Neighborhood. Citizens Dock would be moved in order to allow for the more intensive use of the Whatcom Creek Waterway.



- Expanded CBD Core: This concept is characterized by an expansion of the types of land uses in the Central Business District into the Central Waterfront District. This would create a single large business center with the emphasis on office, financial institutions, department stores, and specialty retail uses, entertainment and cultural facilities, perhaps including governmental facilities.

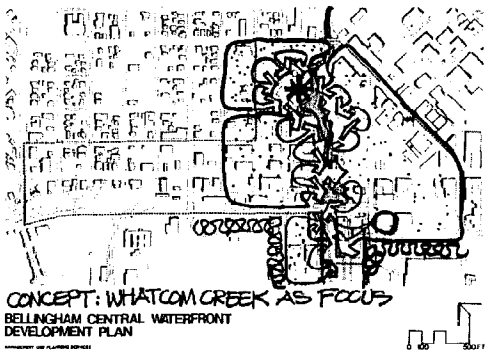
  Concern over this concept centered on competition with the CBD, limited market demand for the additional office and retail uses, concern for existing uses in the area and zoning issues.



- Expanded Port and Squalicum Harbor Core: This concept would expand the marin commercial and recreational activities at Squalicum Harbor and/or expand the marine industrial and shipping activities the Port has at the South Terminal.

  One idea was the relocation of the Georgia-Pacific treatment ponds and creation of a new 1,000 slip marina within the breakwater. Upland of this new marina would be a hotel convention center facility with a support retail and restaurants and residential uses.

  The other direction was a major new trade and distribution center with cargo and container yards and new wharfs in the waterway. Concerns again centered on competition with the Port and the obvious difficulties of relocating the treatment ponds.



- Whatcom Creek As Focus: This concept is a direct expression of the goals and objectives and precepts which emphasized the importance of the creek, existing facilities and amenities along the creek and the desire to add to them.

  The emphasis here is on an inward looking focus for redevelopment of the area.

  Concepts for the focus included:

  - A Whatcom Creek Walk, or the "Venice on the Whatcom," where city-owned property is used to redevelop the area in a very intense urban way. The prototype for this concept would be the River Walk in San Antonio, Texas or the Grand Canal of Venice. A pedestrian promenade would be created along the creek and enclosed by new buildings which would create small "vest pocket" type urban squares and parks.

  - A Central Park concept which suggested enlarging the Maritime Heritage Center Park by acquiring additional land along the railroad tracks and the creek. The park would stretch between the CBD and Squalicum Harbor and would have pedestrian trails throughout. This enlarged park would also act as a "buffer" between the Lettered Streets Neighborhood and intensive industrial activities south of Roeder.

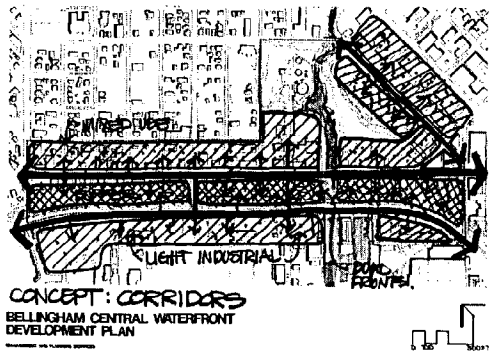
  - A Convention and Arts Center envisioned the expansion of the cultural and entertainment activities occurring in the CBD into the Central Waterfront area. The convention and performing arts facility would ideally be located adjacent to the Maritime Heritage Center Park, perhaps on City-owned land or on acquired land adjacent to the Creek which would act as a recreational amenity. Pedestrian linkages would tie this facility to the CBD and Squalicum Harbor.

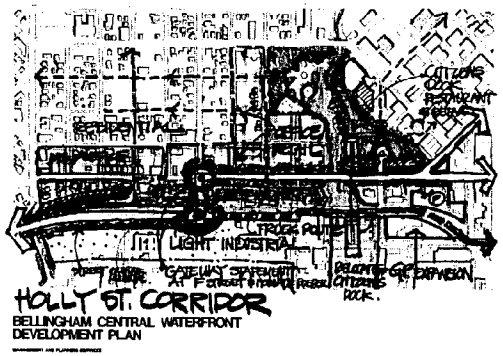
- The "Elbow" was an idea which expressed the fact that the Central Waterfront area occurs at the junction of three different street grids and land use platting patterns. These different platting grids are also expressed in the different land uses that occur in each area, i.e. residential on smaller blocks, CBD on larger uphill blocks and industrial, manufacturing as irregular or consolidated blocks.

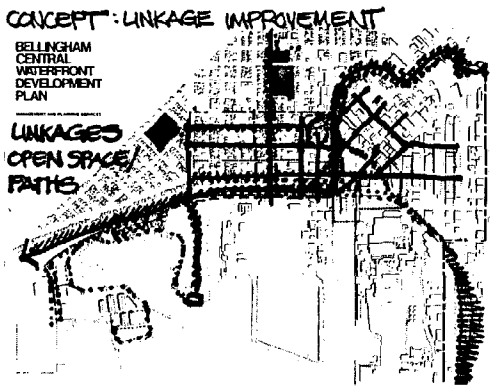
Each of these concepts suggests a reinforcement of Whatcom Creek as a focus of activity for the area. It is the "waterfront" in the Central Waterfront District, and a goal of the City is to provide additional opportunities for the public to enjoy and have access to the Waterfront.

The heavy industrial activities along the Whatcom Creek Waterway, and the treatment ponds adjacent to Bellingham Bay, limit the amount of Waterfront accessible to the public from the downtown area. Hence, the emphasis on focusing in on the Creek as an amenity and on ways of improving that unique amenity.

Following a review of the various concepts for the Whatcom Creek focus, the idea of the "Elbow" emerged as an expression of an appropriate mix of land use activities and at a density closer to what the market demand analysis indicated as practical in the near future.







- Linkages and Corridors: This concept was characterized by an intensification of land uses directly along the major vehicular corridors through the Central Waterfront. The two principal corridors would be along Roeder and Holly Streets and would develop as a "couplet" with the land area located between these two streets having frontages and access from each side.

  The Holly Street Corridor emerged as a recommended concept which acted as a linkage between the CBD and Squalicum Harbor and allowed for a continuation of retail frontage along its length with a mix of land uses on either side. During the charrettes, a number of people also expressed the need to think of the linkages beyond the CBD and Squalicum Harbor to neighborhoods and areas outside the Influence Area in a comprehensive manner. The attempt was made to recognize these interrelationships within the scope of this planning work and to tie proposed linkages and pedestrian and bike paths to those existing and proposed systems.

As part of the participatory and consensus building effort, participants were all given "stick-on" dots to use as votes to express their preferences for a particular concepts. The Technical Committee and public sessions voiced a clear preference for the Whatcom Creek Focus and the idea of Linkages and Corridors.

During the Task Force charrette, a number of votes were given to the concept of an expanded industrial core and use of the Central Waterfront area as a light industrial and manufacturing area.

In addition, a number of public comments were collected on maps of the study area. The public was asked to "create their own plan." The comments and ideas included:

- Whatcom Creek as a tourist-oriented area
- Limited new development around the Creek with an emphasis on the park and the general visual improvement of the area
- A public market
- A "boatel" or a transient moorage area.
- "Let alone" much of the area.

Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria were discussed as a means of comparing the refined Land Use Alternatives. The criteria were agreed to be necessary for a successful plan.

- Land use compatibility
- Linkages/water access
- Environment quality improvement
- Economic growth and feasibility
- Ease of implementation
- Public/private acceptance

In addition to these rather general headings each of the categories were further defined with subcategories to provide a finer tuned evaluation. The subcategories are as follows:

Land Use Compatibility

- Historic preservation
- Development of amenities and open space
- Compatibility with heavy industrial uses and residential areas
- Whatcom Creek Waterway emphasis
- Mitigation of potential conflicts/liabilities
- Protection and enhancement of existing uses

Linkages and Water Access

- Increase of public access to waterfront
- Improved access between Squalicum Harbor and CBD
- Improved access between Lettered Streets Neighborhood and Maritime Heritage Center
- Improved vehicular access on Roeder and Holly Street
- Improved access to Maritime Heritage Center

Environmental Quality Improvement

- Improved visual quality of streetscape
- Improved pedestrian experience within area
- Nuisances controlled
- Improved image and identity
- Improved security and safety
- Improved Maritime Heritage Center Development

Economic Growth and Feasibility

- Fiscal impact to the City
- Fiscal impact to private sector
- Encouragement and enhancement of existing business
- Potential funding sources

Ease of Implementation

- Flexibility in phasing
- Regulatory change necessary
- Equity
- Consistency with existing plans and regulations

Public/Private Acceptance

- Public/political acceptance
- Flexibility in land use
- Relationship to residential neighborhoods

Opportunity Areas

Seven sub-areas within the Central Waterfront area were initially identified based on both natural and physical separations and on regulatory designations of the Bellingham Plan. These opportunity areas would assist in the development of concepts for the area and could be used to identify specific improvement projects for the area. (See Figure 17: Opportunity Areas.)

The seven opportunity areas are:

- The Whatcom Creek Focus
- Old Town Core
- Hilltop/CBD Transition
- Old Town Fringe
- Industrial Expansion Area
- Holly/Roeder Street Corridor Linkage

These opportunity areas are used to describe the various public improvement projects, use emphasis, regulatory changes, and development potentials of each of the land use alternatives.

Refined Alternatives

Based on the general concepts discussed earlier, three illustrative Development Plan alternatives were developed based on the preference for and the potentials of a Whatcom Creek Focus and the idea of linkages and corridors.

The three illustrative Development Plan Alternatives discussed ranged from an industrial/manufacturing based land use emphasis to a intensified commercial/retail/recreational emphasis. The previously expressed preferences for a Whatcom Creek focus, mix of light industrial/commercial uses and CBD - Squalicum linkage along Roeder/"F"/Holly Streets are all developed at different levels of emphasis within each alternative. The three alternatives are:

- Alternative 1: Waterfront Rejuvenation: The emphasis here is a continuation of the light industrial/manufacturing and retail uses currently in the area. Zoning would be brought in line with the many non-conforming uses in the area and those uses would be allowed to expand. Safety stabilization of Citizens Dock at its current location is included.

- Alternative 2: Waterfront Catalyst Plus: This alternative would use City-owned property around the park as a catalyst to stimulate private development and increase economic and employment opportunities in the area. The land use emphasis would be a mix of light industrial and increased commercial/retail and recreational uses. Moving Citizens Dock into the park is suggested.

- Alternative 3: Waterfront Renaissance: This alternative would encourage increased commercial/retail/entertainment and recreational use of the Central Waterfront. City property in and around the park and Maritime Heritage Center would be used to stimulate private sector investment. Increased opportunities for public access to the waterfront is suggested by a lagoon for historic ships, and bulkheaded wharfs. Citizens Dock is moved to the park and is a focal point of the interpretive center.

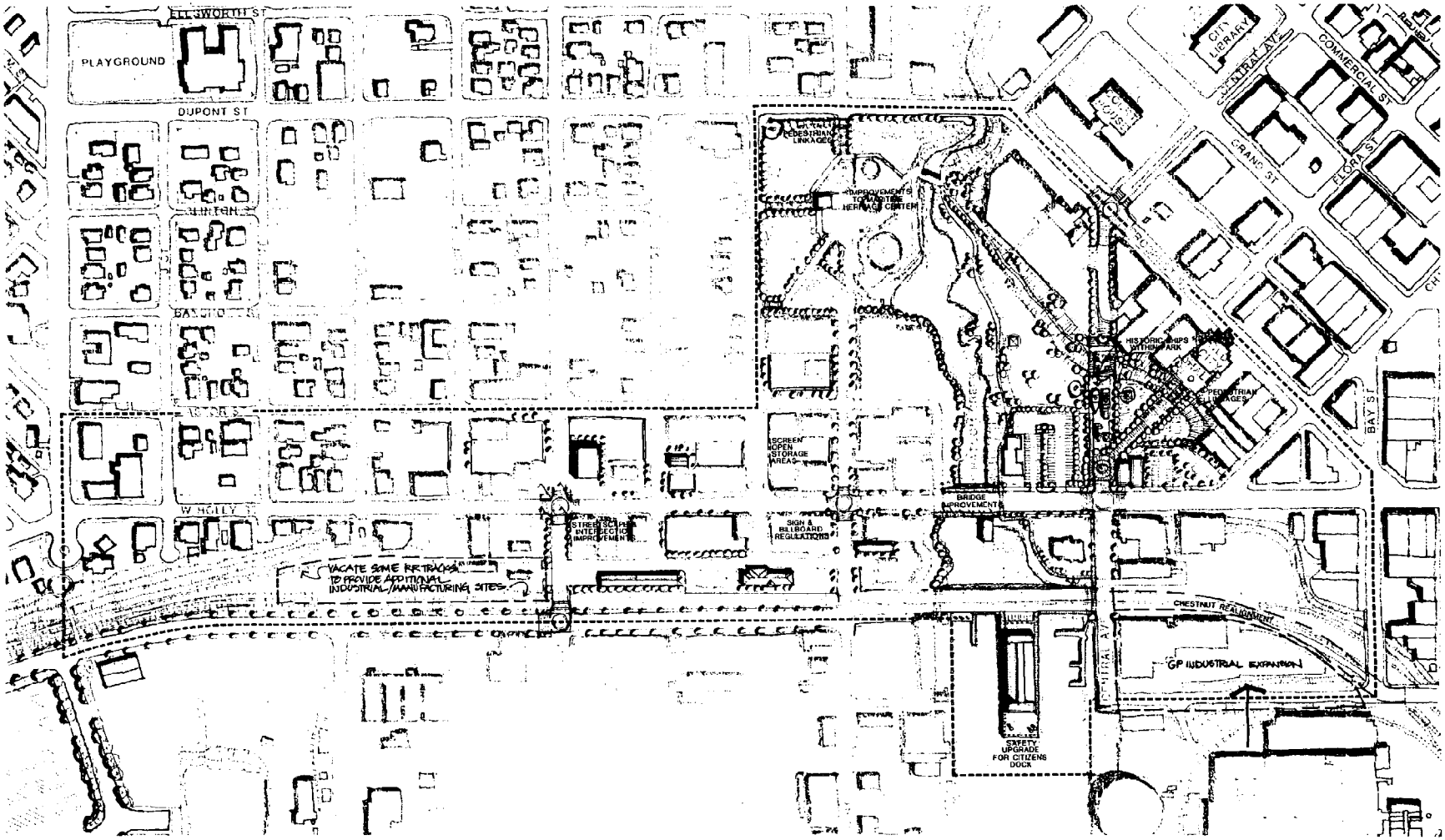


Figure 70

Alternative 1: Waterfront Rejuvenation

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

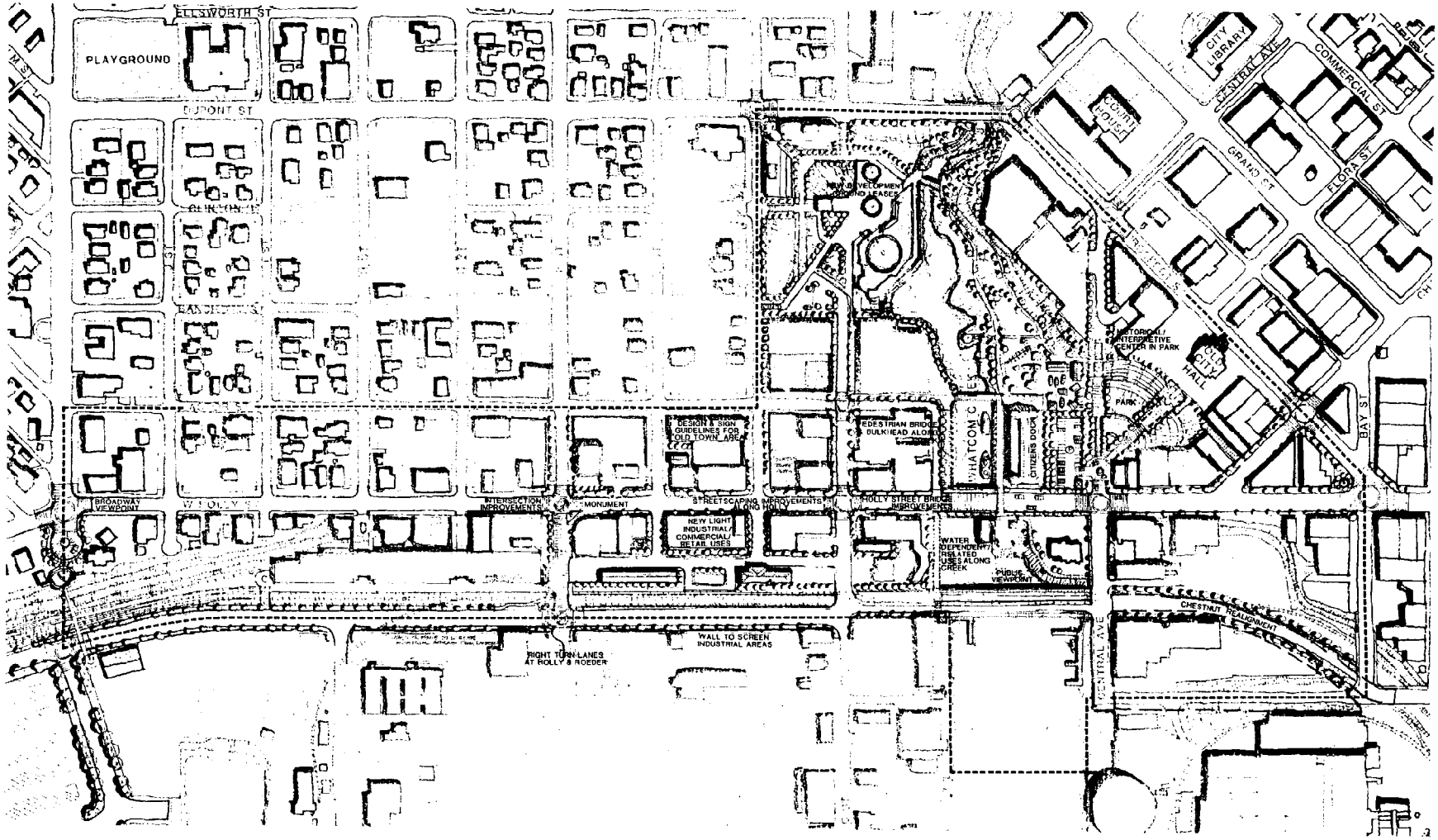


Figure 71

Alternative 2: Waterfront Catalyst Plus

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

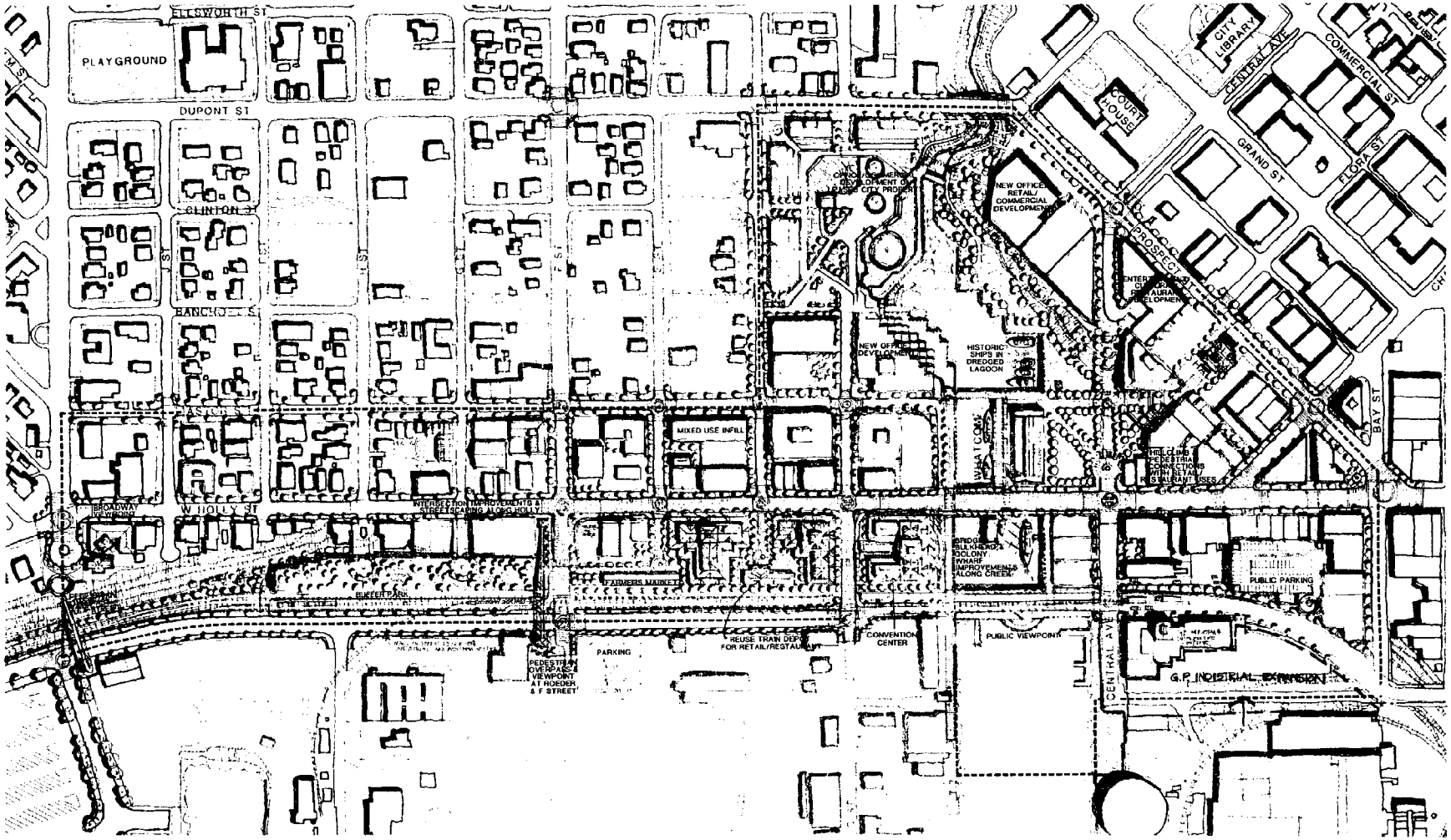


Figure 72

Alternative 3: Waterfront Renaissance

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

Continuing the efforts to build consensus for a preferred Development Plan among the various interest groups, participants at the public session were again asked to "vote" using "stick-on" dots for the alternatives they felt best represented the goals and objectives for the area. The following are the results of the public meeing vote.

		Votes
Alternative 1:	Waterfront Rejuvenation	19.5
Alternative 2:	Waterfront Catalyst Plus	20.5
Alternative 3:	Waterfront Renaissance	10.0

During the charrette session a number of key issues also arose concerning each of the alternatives. These included:

- Whether or not Citizens Dock should be moved from the Whatcom Creek Waterway to north of Holly in the Park.
- The cost of rehabilitation of Citizens Dock and possible cost reductions if it were used as an open air pavillion.
- Parking requirements and location to accommodate new retail/commercial uses.
- A need for zoning changes to bring land use in line with non-conforming uses.
- Screening or buffering industrial uses south of Roeder from upland uses.
- A need to address greater density and encourage new development in the Lettered Streets Neighborhood Area 8 along the bluff to take advantage of views into Park and Maritime Heritage Center and of this areas proximity to downtown and Squalicum Harbor.
- The need for "F" Street/Holly/Roeder Connection.

- A need to involve Burlington Northern Railroad as a significant participant in land use direction for the area.

- A two-way "D" Street to provide improved access to not only the Maritime Heritage Center, but the entire Central Waterfront District.

- Uphill pedestrian connections from the park to the museum.

- The idea of a "theme" development such as "Old Town" with design guidelines or standards to encourage a scale and character to this area.

Based on the review of these three alternatives, and on the key issues that arose, a fourth or "hybrid" alternative was developed. This alternative combined those element or "common threads" of the first three alternatives as well as new ideas and actions suggested during the refined alternative charrette.

The "common threads" that were part of the Composite Alternative include the following:

Common Threads

- Relocation of Citizens Dock to the north of Holly Street.

- The Waterfront needs attention in terms of accessibility.

- Extensive retail activities may not be viable given the limited market.

- Preserve existing businesses in the area.

- Establish higher intensity of land use along Holly to link to Squalicum Harbor.

- The need for design guidelines mechanism to address development over time. Perhaps the use of a planned commercial designation in zoning to control design.

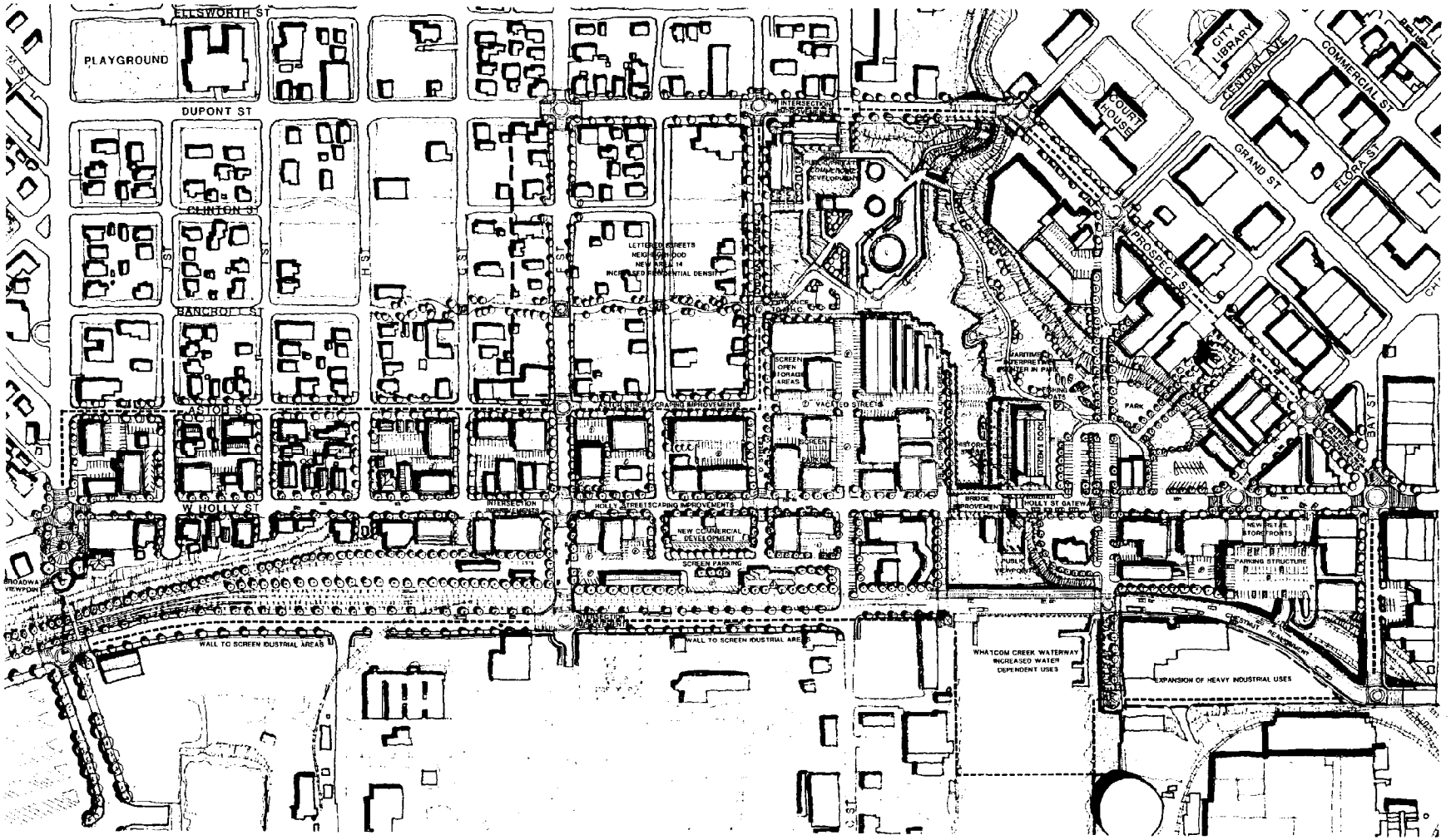


Figure 73

Alternative 4: Composite

Bellingham Central Waterfront Development Plan - Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group

- Design attention needed for the Holly/"F"/Roeder Street intersections in order for it to work as a linkage.

- Recognize the museum/theatre district adjacent to CBD in Plan.

- A mix of land uses is acceptable.

Alternative 4: Composite

Based on the comments received during the planning charrettes and directions from the Technical Committee and Task Force, a Composite Alternative was developed that addresses the concerns of the various interest groups as well as achieves the goals for the area as expressed early in the planning process. The following is a description of this Compositive Alternative:

- Citizens Dock: Save it and move it north of Holly into Whatcom Creek Maritime Heritage Center Park. Renovate architecturally significant parts of the building, but keep the central portion of building as an open-air pavilion in order to reduce renovation costs. Use the open air portions for recreation; music/performance (stage); picnic tables; interpretive center; use front and rear portions of buildings for restrooms; park offices; small retail tourist shops, and/or a small restaurant or deli type sandwich shop that would cater to park users. If necessary, due to the scale of the building in relationship to the size of the park, portions (bays) of central section might be left out. This action is dependent upon both its financial feasibility and political acceptance.

- Whatcom Creek Waterway: Emphasis of Waterway will be on its importance as a working industrial waterfront with barge staging; tugs and marine dependent/water-related uses. By removal of Citizens Dock, more intensive waterborne traffic can use the Waterway which should benefit industrial users and increase the value of properties along the Waterway for those types of activities. Enhancement of opportunities for these water-dependent uses was considered an asset to the Central Waterfront particularly with enhanced public visual access and understanding of industry.

Seaplanes and existing transit moorage will be allowed to remain. Additional moorage will occur at Squalicum Harbor.

- Holly Bridge Gateway: Relocate Citizens Dock in the park and front the building along the northeast side of street just south of Holly Bridge (on/or in the vicinity of the Shrimp Shack site). Use old concrete light standards with globe-type fixtures in a close spacing on bridge railings to visually enhance the "gateway" quality of bridge. Construct a public viewpoint and platform with tower and interpretive materials on City-owned property south of Holly. Consideration must be given to public acquisition of the remaining private property in this location (Shrimp Shack and St. John's Glass).

- Old Town Core (Opportunity Area B): Consolidate properties within industrial area through possible street vacations in exchange for public access along Whatcom Creek north of Holly (along "B" street ROW). This pedestrian route could be on land or a boardwalk extending over the creek. Construct new entrance to Maritime Heritage Center (MHC) and fish rearing facility from "D" Street and close entrance from "C" Street. Make "D" Street two-way with parallel parking. Improve crosswalk/intersection at "D" Street and Holly to emphasize entrance/orientation to MHC. Streetscape "D" Street. Land use emphasis on mixed-use light industrial, manufacturing and retail/commercial uses (within opportunity Area B). Develop design standards or policies for this area. Change zoning to allow non-water related retail uses. Let Shoreline Master Program regulate setbacks, etc. within 200 feet shoreline boundary.

  Opportunity Area B might be considered a special review district, or a "planned" designation applied to zoning to allow for site plan review.

- Hilltop CBD Transition (Opportunity Area C): This area should continue to be an intensive activity center for entertainment and cultural activities. The area between Holly and the proposed realignment of Chestnut and Roeder is proposed for a structured parking garage that would serve Georgia-Pacific parking needs as well as the general public. Due to the topographic grade change a structured parking garage could have access from a number of different street locations and at different levels without ramping.

In order to blend the parking garage into the Holly Street area, retail street frontage should line the Holly Street side of the structure as much as possible. A public/private project is suggested. Access could be from Central, Bay, perhaps Chestnut/Roeder Ramp; and even Holly as long as vehicular traffic did not adversely impact pedestrian traffic. A portion of this area is within the old alignment or ROW of Army Street, a street ROW that is between Bay and Central. This City ROW could be used to act as a catalyst for development of the parking and any retail frontages.

The use of City-owned property near the corner of Dupont and "D" Street for commercial development through ground leases was identified as a means of stimulating economic redevelopment in the area. The amount of development should reflect a market driven response and not compete with private development in the CBD.

- Lettered Street Neighborhood/Area 8: Change development standards to allow greater residential densities in Area 8 of the Lettered Streets Neighborhood. Greater density is appropriate in this area due to its close proximity to downtown, the CBD, and the large open space at the Maritime Heritage Center. Greater lot coverage and less lot area per unit with possible reductions in parking requirements are incentives that could increase the residential development in the area. Fees in lieu of providing these amenities could be one implementation approach. Office densities should remain the same.

- Whatcom Creek Focus (Opportunity Area A): Retain Opportunity Area A's land use designation of Waterfront Commercial but expand the allowed retail uses to include non-water related ones.

- Opportunity Area F Holly/Roeder "F" Street Corridor: Widen out curb return radii to maximum 35 feet to 50 feet to provide a smooth transition at "F" Street and Roeder and Holly Street. A problem at "F" and Roeder is with the number of RR tracks that exist. Smoother track crossings should be installed. Signage and signals should be improved at this location for easily understandable traffic movement and safety. Through Holly traffic should continue to occur as well.

- Opportunity Area E Industrial Expansion Area: Change zoning of this area between the Roeder/Chestnut Realignment and the vacated portion of Chestnut to Heavy Industrial to accommodate GP expansion.

Figure 74 following describes the specifics of each of the four Development Plan alternatives by the seven opportunity areas.

Figure 74
Description of the Alternatives

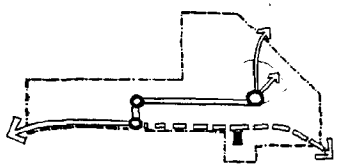
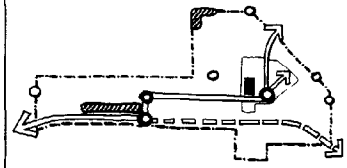
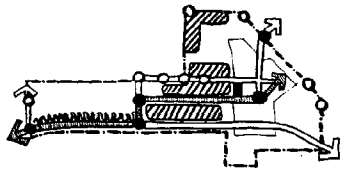
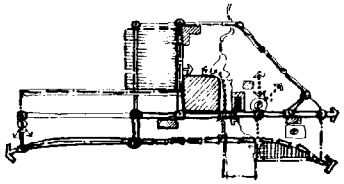
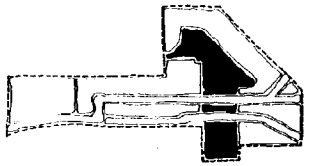
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
A WHATCOM CREEK FOCUS 	• Retain public property and maintain as park • Retain natural creek shoreline • Create active maritime displays (i.e. boardable fishing boats on land) • Up-hill pedestrian linkages to museum and government center • Safety upgrades to preserve Citizen Dock until funding available for renovation • Use emphasis - public/ recreational/educational/ cultural	• Retain park/open space • Create demonstration project with reconstruction of Citizen Dock north of Holly Street • Pedestrian bridge across creek • Up-hill pedestrian linkages • Include historical museum/ interpretive center • Use emphasis - public/ recreation/education with limited private commercial	• Urban park-smaller open spaces with public-private development • Lease/sale of city property to stimulate private development • Develop historical museum/ interpretive center around lagoon with historic ships • Creek shoreline improvements • Upland pedestrian linkages with development projects • Pedestrian bridge across creek • Creek dam/fish ladder to control tidal flows • Reconstruction of Citizen Dock north of Holly • Use emphasis - mix of public/ private/commercial	• Retain Maritime Heritage Center Park • Relocate Citizens Dock to park and renovate • Develop up-hill pedestrian linkages • Interpretive center within park • Develop new entrance to Maritime Heritage Center from "D" Street • Develop a public view point s.w. of Holly on city-owned property • Improve Holly Street Bridge to create a "gateway" • Develop a pedestrian promenade along Whatcom Creek • Use emphasis: public/ recreational/educational/ waterfront access

Figure 74
Description of the Alternatives (cont)

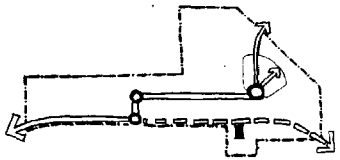
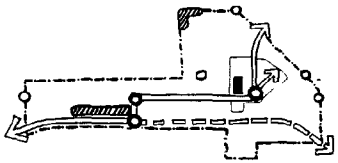
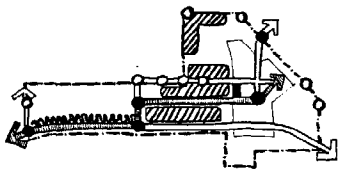
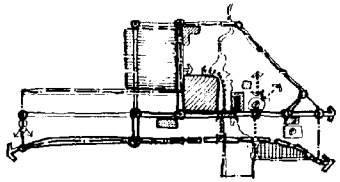
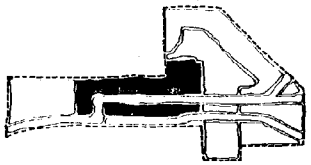
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
B **OLD TOWN CORE** 	• Paint-up, fix-up, clean-up with screening of open storage • Zoning changes to stimulate private development • Buffer historic buildings from industrial uses • Enact a sign/billboard ordinance to regulate size/type of signs • Enact minimal maintenance ordinance for older buildings • Use emphasis - mix of light industrial/commercial/retail (reinforcement of existing)	• Zoning changes/design guidelines for improvement of area - flexibility in uses. Emphasis on "old town" architectural style and scale. • Provide for water-related and water-dependent uses within the 200-foot shoreline boundary along Whatcom Creek • Screen industrial areas south of Roeder Street along RR tracks • Enact sign and minimal maintenance ordinances • Improve connections to Maritime Heritage Center along "C" and "D" Streets • Use emphasis - mix of light industrial/commercial/retail	• Zoning changes/design guidelines for continuous building facades along Holly Street. Emphasis on "old town" architectural style and scale. • Pedestrian amenities at street level • Create old town center around train depot - consolidate 3 blocks - develop shops, public market with historical character • Renovate key historical structures • Develop pedestrian overpass from Holly Street over Roeder at "F" Street • Change shoreline programs to allow non-water-dependent/ water-related uses within 200 foot boundary along Whatcom Creek • Use emphasis of commercial/ retail	• Change waterfront commercial zoning to allow a wider range of non-water related retail uses • Consolidate light manufacturing and industrial properties between creek, "D" Street, Maritime Heritage Center and Holly by street vacations to provide more on-site parking and reduce circulation problems • Close entrance to Maritime Heritage Center at "C" Street • Widen "D" Street to two-way • Screen open storage areas and surface parking lots • Develop design standards to emphasize "old town" architectural style and scale

Figure 74

Description of the Alternatives (cont)

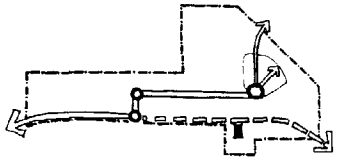
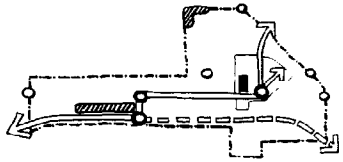
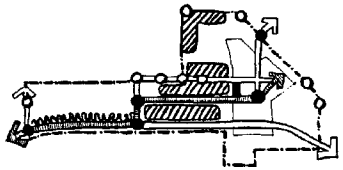
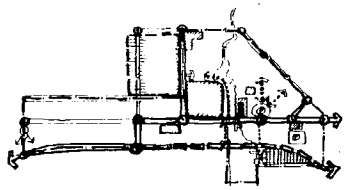
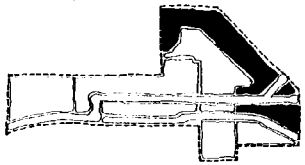
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
C HILLTOP/CBD TRANSITION 	• Pedestrian linkages to Whatcom Creek • Relocate fire station • Screen surface parking lots from view of park • Improve signage to direct visitors to park, Maritime Heritage Center and trail system • Use emphasis - mix of commercial/governmental/ cultural/light industrial south of Holly Street with design review	• Joint public/private building project at Dupont/"D" Streets through ground leases • Relocate fire station and post office • Improve pedestrian linkages to park, Maritime Heritage Center and trail system • Design guidelines for new structures to emphasize "old town" character and scale • Use emphasis - mix commercial/ governmental/cultural	• Public parking structure south of Holly Street between Central and Bay Streets • Relocate fire station and post office • Provide for ground leases/sale of upland properties along "C" Street, Dupont and Prospect to stimulate private development • Redevelopment of post office, other hilltop sites • Hill-climb retail along pedestrian linkages at museum and Central Avenue R.O.W. to Prospect Street • Use emphasis - mix of commercial/governmental/ cultural	• Develop pedestrian linkages to Maritime Heritage Center • Develop a joint public and private commercial development at corner of Dupont and "D" Streets through the use of ground leases of city-owned property • Develop a parking structure south of Holly between Central and Bay Streets and the Chestnut realignment to be shared between Georgia Pacific and public • Develop new retail storefronts along Holly frontage of parking structure • Intersection improvements at Prospect and Champion, Central and Lottie, including special paving materials, bollards, lighting, signage and streetscaping

Figure 74
Description of the Alternatives (cont)

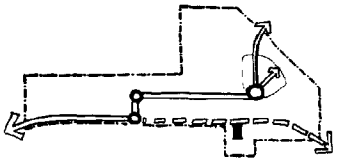
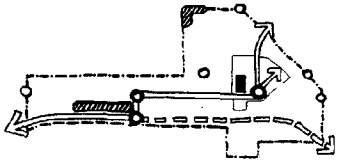
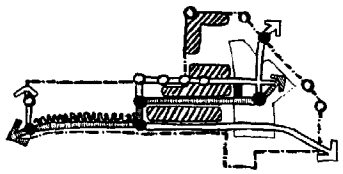
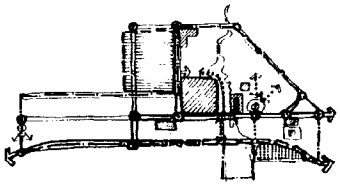
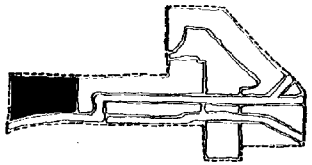
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
D **OLD TOWN FRINGE** 	• Holly Street upgrading with streetscape amenities • Retain existing zoning • Use emphasis - mix of commercial/residential	• Reduce estimated square footage required/unit for multi-family residential • Encourage mixed use - office/ residential • Develop public viewpoint at end of Broadway Street • Use emphasis - mix of commercial/residential	• Reduce square foot lots/unit multi-family • Encourage mixed use office/ residential/retail • Develop viewpoint at Broadway Street end • Develop pedestrian overpass to/from Broadway viewpoint to Squalicum Harbor over Roeder Avenue • Develop buffer park along Great Northern RR R.O.W. at bottom of bluff between "F" Street and Squalicum Harbor • Rezone of area "D" to commercial/office/retail buffer residential neighborhood transition zone • Street improvements along Holly between "F" Street and Broadway • Use emphasis - mix of commercial/residential	• Buffer railroad switching yards from uphill residential and office use by landscaping • Develop a public viewpoint at Broadway Street end • Establish a new lettered streets neighborhood area 14 with increased residential densities between Astor and Dupont and "D" and mid-block between "F" and "G" Streets. maintain current office densities • Allow for reduced open space requirement in residential development by payment of fees earmarked for Maritime Heritage Center Park improvements • Streetscaping improvements along "F", "D", Astor and Dupont Streets

Figure 74

Description of the Alternatives (cont)

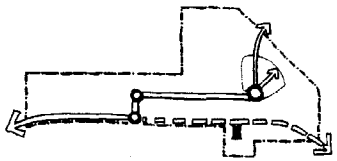
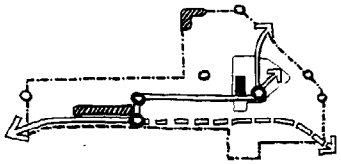
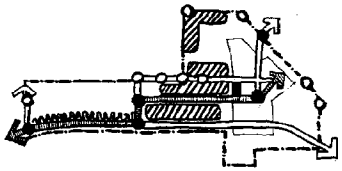
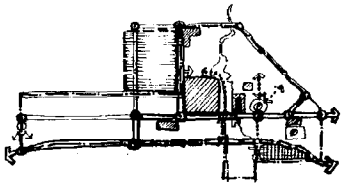
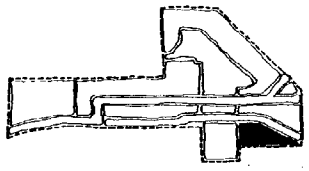
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
E **INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION AREA** 	• Land swap with/G.P. for street re-alignment • Encourage heavy industrial development • Vacate Chestnut Street • Use emphasis - heavy industrial	• Screen industrial areas from Holly Street • Vacate Central Avenue south of Roeder and Chestnut Streets • Use emphasis - heavy industrial	• Vacate Chestnut Street • Screen industrial expansion area • Develop G.P. Interpretive Center and Museum in Old Grain Mill Buildings along Central Avenue and Roeder Street • Use emphasis - heavy industrial	• Vacate Chestnut Street and Central Avenue to consolidate property • Screen industrial expansion from Central Business District • Change zoning to heavy industrial

Figure 74

Description of the Alternatives (cont)

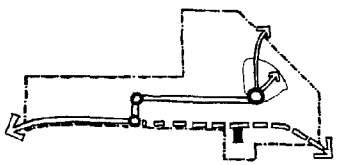
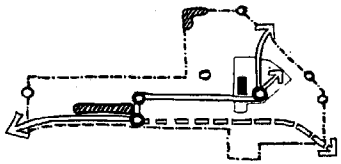
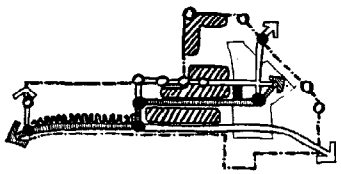
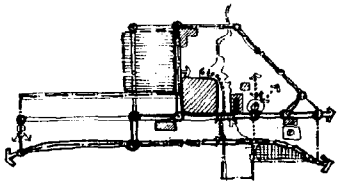
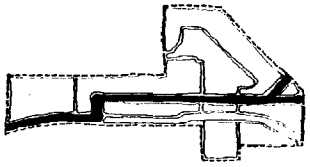
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
F **HOLLY/ROEDER STREET CORRIDOR LINKAGE** 	• Continue streetscape improvements from Roeder Street and CBD • Improve/coordinate signage • Special traffic/gateway improvements at "F" Street • Special bridge improvements across Whatcom Creek	• Underground utilities • Continue streetscape improvements from Roeder Street and CBD • Design guidelines for coordinated signage, lighting, building development • Traffic plus amenity projects at "F" Street (park) and Whatcom Creek (overlook) • Right turn lanes at Holly, Roeder and "F" Streets	• Underground utilities • Right turn islands at Holly and Roeder and "F" Streets; use island for public art work depicting unique Bellingham theme from history such as "4th of July 1883" • Continue street scape improvements • Additional intersection improvements at Roeder and Holly Streets at "C" Street as secondary linkage between CBD, Squalicum Harbor and Maritime Heritage Center • Improve "gateway" image of Holly Street bridge over Whatcom Creek with banners, overlooks, etc. • Intersection improvements at Holly and Prospect, Bay, "C," "D," "E," "F," and Roeder and "C" and "F" Streets and at Tom Glenn Drive at Squalicum Harbor	• Develop intersection improvements including special paving materials, bollards, special lighting standards with banners, and streetscaping, along the length of Holly between CBD and Broadway • Intersection improvements at Holly and Broadway, "F", "D", Central Avenue, Champion Street, and Bay and Roeder, "F" Street, and Tom Glenn Drive • Underground utilities between "F" Atreet and Bay along Holly • Encourage visual screens along southwest side of Roeder to block industrial areas from view

Figure 74
Description of the Alternatives (cont)

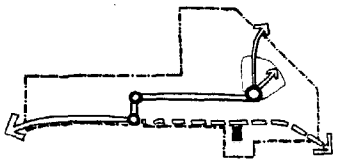
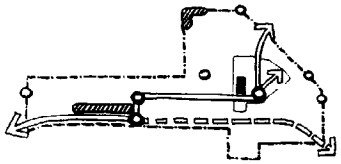
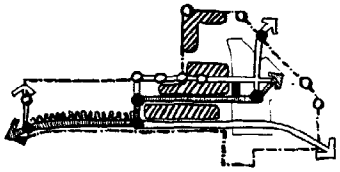
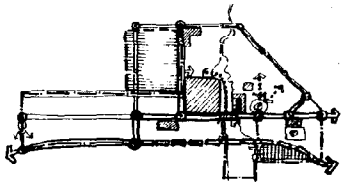
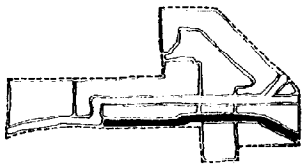
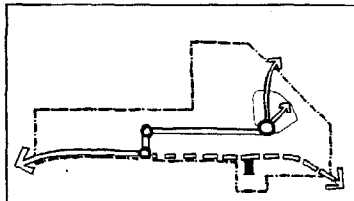
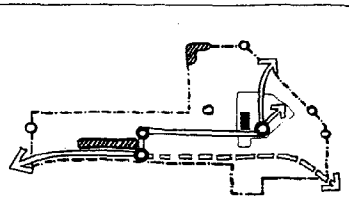
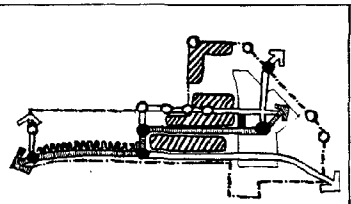
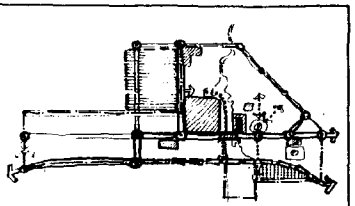
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
G **ROEDER/CHESTNUT STREET REALIGNMENT** 	• Re-align Chestnut Street • Designated truck route allowing access to heavy industry	• Re-align Chestnut Street • Designated truck route allowing access to heavy industry • Iron fence along RR tracks and Roeder Street to visually screen area	• Re-align Chestnut Street • Designated truck route allowing access to heavy industry • Iron fence along RR tracks and Roeder to visually screen area • Intersection improvements at "C" Street and Roeder Street as secondary linkage to Holly Street and to define RR Depot block redevelopment area • Develop overlook on Roeder Bridge at Whatcom Creek waterway • Improve "gateway" image of Roeder Bridge at Whatcom Creek	• Realign Chestnut Street • Designated truck route allowing access for heavy industry • Screen industrial areas from view at Holly • Make necessary roadway improvements to Roeder Street and bridge to improve traffic circulation

Figure 74
Description of the Alternatives (cont)

OPPORTUNITY AREAS	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY/ FUNDING SOURCES	• Level development/improvements in line with current/forecast market conditions (market responsive) • Low level or capital investment required • Infrastructure funding sources: - CEERB - Public infrastructure trust program - EDA - Title I - GO Bonds	• Level development/improvements in line with current/forecast market conditions (market responsive) • Moderate level of capital investment required • Infrastructure funding sources: - CERB - Public infrastructure trust program - EDA - Title I - GO Bonds • Funding required for rehab/ reconstruction/relocation of citizen dock (public/private sector)	• Speculative development versus market driven • High level of capital investment required • Funding sources (public/ private) - UDAG - SBA loans - Block grants/loans - Private sector (equity/debt) - Public sector (local governments)	• Level of development/ improvements in line with current forecast market conditions • Moderate level of capital investment required • Funding sources could include use of city-owned property through ground leases and "development fees" paid in lieu of open space and sale of vacated street right-of-ways to produce capital • Interagency commission for outdoor recreation as possible park and Citizen Dock funding source

Evaluation of the Alternatives

Following the development of the fourth Development Plan Composite Alternative, each of the alternatives were comparatively evaluated against the evaluation criteria discussed earlier.

Figures 75 and 76 describe the comparative evaluation and ranking of the alternatives.

Figure 75
Evaluation of the Alternatives

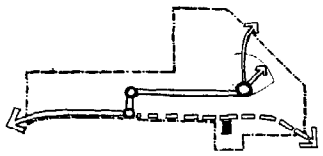
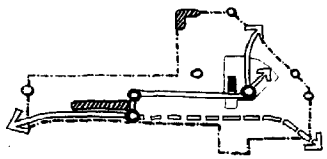
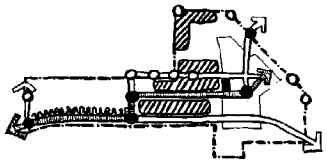
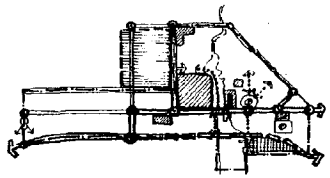
EVALUATION CRITERIA	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
LAND USE COMPATIBILITY HISTORIC PRESERVATION DEVELOPMENT OF AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACE COMPATIBILITY WITH HEAVY INDUSTRIAL USES AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS WHATCOM CREEK WATERWAY EMPHASIS MITIGATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS/LIABILITIES	• Citizen's Dock remains within Whatcom Creek waterway - limits industrial uses • Land use emphasis remains light industrial/light manufacturing • Limited improvements to Maritime Heritage Park; little change in amenities • Conflicts between manufacturing/industrial users and Martime Heritage Center - access	• Citizen's Dock relocated and renovated - opens waterway • Major new amenities and open space • High level of compatibility due to mix of land uses • Increased water dependent/marine industry use of Whatcom Creek waterway • Relocation of Citizen's Dock mitigates potential liabilities/conflicts and enhances existing uses	• Citizen's Dock relocated and renovated; railroad depot renovated for commercial use • Smaller urban park, more extensive waterfront promenade • Intensive commercial uses may be incompatible with industrial uses • Marine industrial use of Whatcom Creek waterway • Displacement of existing uses	• Citizen's Dock relocated and renovated within Maritime Heritage Center park as public open air pavilion and public view point • Mix of land uses compatible with industrial and residential areas • Marine industrial emphasis of Whatcom Creek waterway • Consolidation of light industrial - manufacturing uses between "B" and "D" Streets, Holly and Maritime Heritage Center mitigates potential impacts and project uses
LINKAGES AND WATER ACCESS INCREASE OF PUBLIC ACCESS TO WATERFRONT IMPROVED ACCESS BETWEEN SQUALICUM HARBOR AND CBD IMPROVED ACCESS BETWEEN LETTERED STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD AND MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER IMPROVED VEHICULAR MOVEMENT ON ROEDER AND HOLLY STREETS IMPROVED ACCESS TO MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER	• Public access to waterfront along creek limited to Maritime Heritage Center park improvements • Limited improvements to Roeder and Holly provides somewhat improved circulation between C.B.D. and Squalicum Harbor • Somewhat improved access to Maritime Heritage Center along "C" street	• Increased public access to waterfront within park • Improved circulation between C.B.D. and Squalicum Harbor with right turn lanes at "F" Street, Roeder and Holly • Improved access to Maritime Heritage Center through new development at Dupont and "D" Street and improved access at "C" Street	• Extensive waterfront access • Improved vehicular and pedestrian movement between Squalicum Harbor, C.B.D. and Lettered Streets Neighborhood along Holly, Roeder, "C" and "F" streets • Extensive street improvements, signage and signalization	• Waterfront promenade and public viewpoint along creek provide public access • Improved pedestrian and vehicular movement between Squalicum Harbor and C.B.D. - with improvements at "F", Holly, and Roeder • New entrance to Maritime Heritage Center at "D" Street • Improved access to Lettered Streets Neighborhood from Maritime Heritage Center with public/private development at Dupont and "D" Streets

Figure 75
Evaluation of the Alternatives (cont)

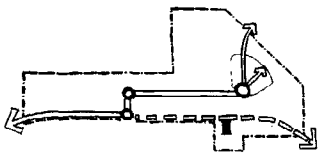
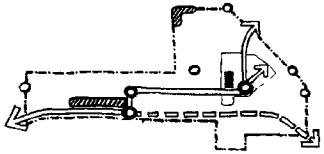
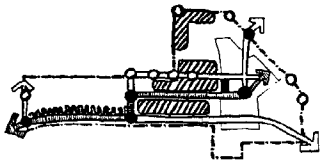
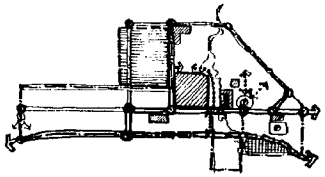
EVALUATION CRITERIA	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IMPROVED VISUAL QUALITY OF STREETSCAPE NUSANCES CONTROLLED IMPROVED IMAGE AND IDENTITY IMPROVED SECURITY AND SAFETY IMPROVED MARITIME HERITAGE CENTER DEVELOPMENT	• Sign and billboard regulations improve visual quality • Limited improvement to pedestrian access along Holly and within Maritime Heritage Center park • Low potential for nuisance complaints due to industrial image and use • Improvements limited to paint-up/fix-up solutions - some environmental quality improvement	• Improved image and identity with streetscaping along Holly Street and mix of land uses • Improved pedestrian linkages between park and C.B.D. and along Holly • Relocation of Citizen's Dock and mix of land uses reduces potential for nuisances/ liabilities • Improved vehicular and pedestrian safety along Holly, Roeder and "C" Streets	• Extensive streetscaping and pedestrian improvements to improve image, identity, security and safety • Industrial uses isolated southwest of Roeder Street to control nuisances • Waterfront center development around railroad depot enhances images of "old town"	• Streetscape improvements along Holly, Astor, Roeder, "D" and "F" Streets - improve identity and pedestrian experience • "Gateway" improvement to Holly Street bridge to enhance sense of entry to area • Extensive pedestrian improvement along creek and within park • Consolidation of light industrial/manufacturing uses between "B", "D" and Holly Streets and the Maritime Heritage Center to control nuisances and improve security and safety • Maritime Interpretive Center within Maritime Heritage Center park

Figure 75
Evaluation of the Alternatives (cont)

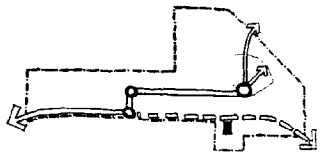
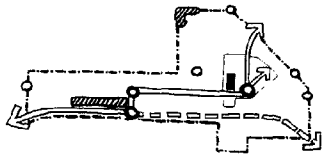
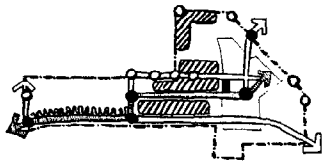
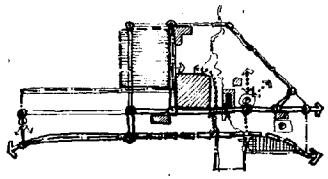
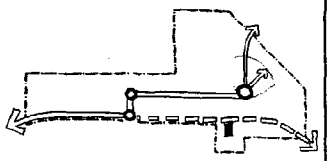
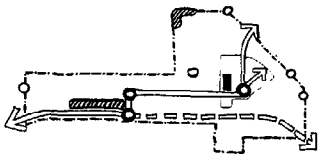
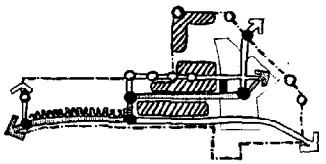
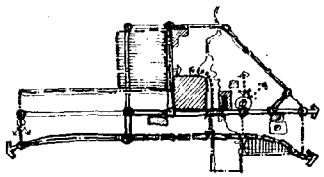
EVALUATION CRITERIA	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
ECONOMIC GROWTH AND FEASIBILITY FISCAL IMPACT TO THE CITY FISCAL IMPACT TO PRIVATE SECTOR ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING BUSINESSES POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	• Area would remain predominately industrial and manufacturing in use - little incentive for economic growth or change • Low level of capital investment • Existing businesses would remain • Potential Funding Sources (Local, State, Federal) - GO Bonds - CERB - Public Infrastructure Trust Program - EDA-Title I - IAC • Market Responsive	• Joint public/private commercial development provides positive fiscal impact to city (ground leases) and incentives to private investment • Amenities encourage investment • Mix of land uses allows for existing businesses • Potential Funding Sources (Local, State, Federal) - GO Bonds - CERB - Public Infrastructure Trust Program - EDA-Title I - IAC - UDAG - SBA Loans - Block Grants/Loans - Private Sector (Equity/Debt) - Public Sector (Local Governments • Market Responsive	• Waterfront center development around railroad depot major retail commercial development - increase in revenues • Substantial public/private development would provide incentives for private investment albeit speculative vs. market driven • Displacement of some existing businesses • Potential Funding Sources (Local, State, Federal) - GO Bonds - CERB - Public Infrastructure Trust Program - EDA-Title I - IAC - UDAG - SBA Loans - Block Grants/Loans - Private Sector (Equity/Debt) - Public Sector (Local Governments • Speculative	• Joint public/private commercial development positive fiscal impact to city (ground leases) and incentive to private sector • Amenities encourage investment • Mix of land uses protect existing businesses and allow for new • Potential Funding Sources (Local, State, Federal) - GO Bonds - CERB - Public Infrastructure Trust Program - EDA-Title I - IAC - UDAG - SBA Loans - Block Grants/Loans - Private Sector (Equity/Debt) - Public Sector (Local Governments • Market Responsive
EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION FLEXIBILITY IN PHASING REGULATORY CHANGE NECESSARY EQUITY CONSISTENCY WITH EXISTING PLANS AND REGULATIONS	• Limited improvements would require simple phasing • Zoning and Comprehensive Plan revisions required to bring existing uses into conformance • Inconsistent with existing zoning and shoreline plans and regulations	• Flexible phasing • Zoning and Comprehensive Plan amendments necessary to allow wider range of retail uses in Waterfront Commercial • Land use emphasis consistent with Bellingham Plan goals	• Phasing somewhat less flexible due to the intensity of re-development • Rezoning and Shoreline Program revisions required • Amount of public/private development may raise questions of equity and competition with private sector	• Flexible phasing of projects • Zoning and Comprehensive Plan amendments necessary for more retail uses • Limited public/private development does not compete with private sector • Uses consistent with Bellingham Plan goals

Figure 75
Evaluation of the Alternatives (cont)

EVALUATION CRITERIA	 ALTERNATIVE 1	 ALTERNATIVE 2	 ALTERNATIVE 3	 ALTERNATIVE 4
PUBLIC/PRIVATE ACCEPTANCE PUBLIC/POLITICAL ACCEPTANCE FLEXIBILITY IN LAND USE RELATIONSHIP TO RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS	• High acceptance due to minimal level of change (no action plus) • Little flexibility in land use • Industrial/manufacturing uses would continue to adversely impact residential areas uphill	• High level of public/private acceptance due to mix of land uses, public amenities provided and public/private partnership • Mix of land uses provides flexibility • Mix of land uses compatible with residential neighborhoods	• Difficult public and political acceptance due to intense level of speculative change, capital costs and potential incompatibility with industrial uses • Increased retail/commercial activities could adversely impact residential neighborhoods • People intensify conflicts with industry	• High level of public acceptance due to mix of land uses, public amenities provided and public/private partnership • Increased flexibility in land use with zoning changes • Increased residential densities would provide incentives for new residential development uphill
SUMMARY EVALUATION	• Fair land use compatibility • Minimal level of improved linkages and waterfront access • Some environmental quality upgrades • Low level of economic growth; low level of capital investment; market responsive • Requires low level of implementation mechanisms and monitoring • Moderately high level of public acceptance due to lack of significant change RANK: 3rd	• Good land use compatibility • Moderate level of improved linkages and waterfront access • Moderate level of economic growth; moderate level of caital investment; market responsive • Requires moderate level of implementation mechanisms and monitoring • Moderately high level of public acceptance because of land uses and amenities RANK: 2ND	• Moderate land use compatibility • Extensive linkage and waterfront access improvements • High level of environmental quality • Speculative level of economic growth; high level of capital investment; not market responsive • Requires high level of implementation mechanisms and monitoring • Moderate level of public acceptance due to extensive/speculative capital investment RANK: 4th	• Good land use compatibility • Extensive linkage and waterfront access • Moderate to high level of environmental quality • Moderate level of economic growth; moderately high level of capital investment; market responsive • Requires moderate level of implementation mechanisms and monitoring • High level of public acceptance due to land use mix, amenities, and level of capital investment RANK: 1st

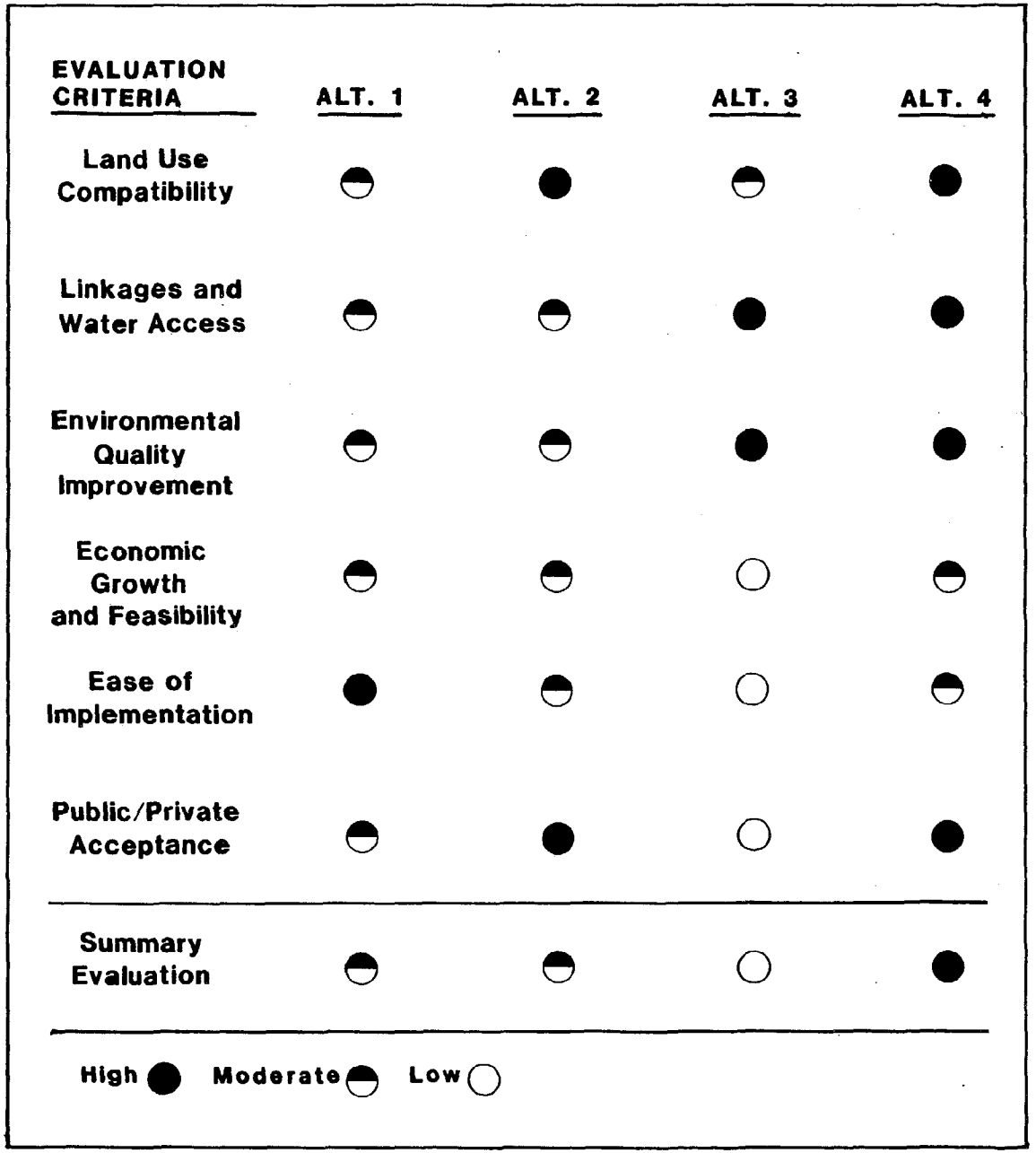


Figure 76
Summary Evaluation of Alternatives

Based on the Comparative Evaluation of the four Development Plan Alternatives, the fourth or Composite Alternative was recommended for further refinement and implementation as the Recommended Development Plan for the Central Waterfront.

Following the discussion of the evaluation of the alternatives, comments were taken from the Task Force, Technical Committee, and general public on how the Recommended Plan could be further refined prior to its implementation. The following are comments received on the preliminary consultant recommendations.

Comments voiced by the Technical Committee and Task Force Sessions:

- The Port expressed a desire to change the allowed uses within the Marine Industrial designation along the I & J Waterway to allow some retail/commercial uses such as retail fish markets or other commercial uses due to the lack of demand for fish processing plants and the general decline in the industry around Bellingham.

- Georgia-Pacific voiced concern over the designation of its property between Central and Bay Streets and Holly and Roeder/Chestnut Realignment only for parking. Georgia-Pacific indicated that portions of their property might be needed for a water filtration/pump station and/or an electrical substation.

- The City had some concern over the vacation of Central Avenue between Chestnut and Roeder for pedestrian access. A street vacation would mean that the City would dispose of the property. The City indicated that perhaps all but a 20 foot wide strip of the street might be vacated in order to allow pedestrian access along it. Georgia-Pacific initially indicated no desire for acquiring the property as it is located on pilings over the water and is in disrepair. Later Georgia-Pacific indicated that it might indeed be interested in acquiring the property together with the R.O.W. Public access to the existing transient and seaplane moorage on the waterway near the Roeder Street Bridge should be continued.

- The City suggested prioritizing and phasing improvements to intersections with the first intersection to be improved being those near downtown and along Holly and at "F" Street. Other intersections would follow as budgets allow. Intersection improvements could also be prioritized in terms of the type and amount of improvement given. Important intersections might have special paving, streetscaping improvements, signage and lighting, and bollards to signify their importance, while other intersections may only receive minimal improvements such as bollards that relate them in theme to the area.

- The City and the Port suggested keeping a suggested pedestrian overpass between Squalicum Harbor and the Broadway Viewpoint even though the funding of such an improvement would depend on capital improvement budgets.

- It was suggested that the refined plan call for maintaining the Old Burlington Northern Depot as it occupies a significant location at the terminus of "D" Street which will take a more significance as a two-way connection to Dupont and the Maritime Heritage Center.

- The Mayor suggested that the new Lettered Streets Area 14 might be extended to include more of Residential Area 9 to provide more incentive for high density residential development near the CBD and the Maritime Heritage Center.

- The appropriateness of seaplanes on the Whatcom Creek Waterway was discussed. For the time being this is the only place to accommodate this use and it should continue until a new location can be found.

- The need for the entire length of Central Avenue for public access was discussed with Task Force members. Planning staff will investigate the use of the street right-of-way for parking purposes.

Comments voiced during the public session centered upon Citizens Dock and public waterfront access:

- Opposition to moving of Citizens Dock
- Public access to the Whatcom Creek Waterway should be enhanced. A desire to be able to actually/physically get down to the waterway was expressed.
- Concern was voiced for the waterway being solely heavy/marine industrial in use
- Public access and parking on Central Avenue right of way between Georgia-Pacific and Roeder was thought to be very important
- Use of City-owned property within the Maritime Heritage Center for joint public/private commercial development was a concern
- There was concern that new commercial development within Maritime Heritage Center would compete with commercial development in the CBD and other areas around downtown
- There is a need for parking near Citizens Dock to make it more accessible to the public
- Impacts may occur from increased residential densities in Lettered Street Area 14 upon other residential areas
- Bellingham Sash and Door had concerns over access to their business and the vacation of Astor and "C" Streets in exchange for pedestrian access along the creek

Despite the continuing issues which must be addressed, there appeared to be considerable agreement on the majority of the problems/solutions of the Central Waterfront. Based on these comments, the Composite Alternative was further refined.

Plan Directions

The fourth or Composite Alternative was further refined and the implementation phasing recommended. The plan and its specific improvement projects are detailed in Section II of this report. The following are the significant refinements made to the plan following its review by the Task Force, Technical Committee and general public.

Refinements to the Composite Alternative

- Keep Central Avenue between Chestnut and Roeder as a public right-of-way and provide for diagonal on-street parking, a vehicle turn around, and a landscaped pedestrian sidewalk along the waterway. This area will provide necessary parking and pedestrian access to the waterway following the realginment of Chestnut and Roeder. The sidewalk will be widened and extended along the Roeder Bridge to a pedestrian viewpoint at mid-point on the bridge. This viewpoint will have benches, lighting and interpretive matrials to describe the working waterfront and industrial activities occurring on the waterway.

  Access to the existing transient moorage and seaplane moorage is retained as well as a means to physically get down to the waters edge.

- Four key intersections along Holly Street were identified as contributing significantly to the linkage between the CBD and Squalicum Harbor through the area. These intersections would receive major improvements such as special street paving, bollards, special lighting, and signage, banners, kiosks, bus shelters, and street furniture. The four intersections are:

  - Holly at Central
  - Holly at "D" Street
  - Holly at "F" Street
  - Roeder at "F" Street

  Other intersections have been prioritized as to the type and amount of improvements necessary and when they would be implemented. Other improvements would be consistent with those already existing in the CBD and at Squalicum Harbor.

- The old Burlington Northern Depot should be maintained as a historically significant structure in the Central Waterfront and as contributing to the scale and character of the area and to the historical importance of the railroads to the area. The building also acts as a visual terminus at the end of "D" Street which, when widened to a two-way street with a new entry to the Maritime Heritage Center, will be a major route through the area. The depot also acts as a buffer between tracks and Holly Street.

- The suggested new Lettered Streets Area 14 was extended to include more of Area 9 to provide additional incentives to housing within the area.

- The pedestrian boardwalk or promenade along the creek adjacent to the "B" Street right-of-way and Bellingham Sash and Door will be designed in such a way as not to impede vehicular access to Sash and Door's parking. The boardwalk could be constructed over the creek's sloping bank and on the waterside of the "B" Street right-of-way. This would follow the historic location of the Old Colony Wharf that ran along the waterfront at this location prior to land fills in the area. The promenade could be built out over the creek on pilings as it turns along the backside of Sash and Doors' property to link up to the Salmon Life Cycle Facility. If this appears to be physically or financially a problem, a new pedestrian bridge could be built over the creek to link it back to the pedestrian trails in the Maritime Heritage Center Park.

- Citizens Dock is moved north of Holly Street into the park and will be partially restored and act as a pavilion for a maritime interpretive center with boats and historic materials. The front and rear portions of Citizens Dock are to be reused as enclosed leasable space which might contain a small retail food outlet providing seafood to the public that use the park, and leasable office space in the upper floors. The central portion of the building might only contain two or three bays of the original building in order to reduce the mass of the building and provide for views through the building to the creek from upland areas. The front and rear portions of the building should be located the same distance as the original buildings mass and footprint was. An open air pavilion could provide space for the display of boats, or provider for fair weather gatherings, music or theatre events.

The Citizens Dock pavilion is located with its architecturally significant front facade facing on to Holly Street near the Holly Street Bridge. This helps to define the street edge and from a "gateway" into the Central Waterfront area. This gateway would be accented with brightly colored banners, flags, and seasonal flowering plants to make it can inviting ad colorful place.

A boardwalk along the creek could be terraced down toward the creek and provide areas for seating and fair weather dining. Historic ship might be moored along this boardwalk/pier if adequate water level in the creek is achievable to allow for it. A fish ladder and spillway type dam with tide gate recommended in the Whatcom Creek Open Space Plan would allow for a constant water level to be maintained in the creek and reduce tidal changes in the creek level and the occasional salt water low tide odors. The dam would create a salt and fresh water estuary and adjustment area for outgoing steelhead. The lagoon created could actually enhance steelhead breeding by providing another feeding station for outgoing fish. Feeding of fish and the fish ladder would be an additional attraction for visitors to the park.

The details of other specific improvement projects are given in Section II of this plan along with phasing and implementation descriptions. Figure 5 shows an illustrative site plan and Figures 6 through 10 are illustrative sketches of a number of the suggested improvements.

Appendices

STUDY WORK SESSIONS (Charrettes)

Full-day work sessions were held throughout the Central Waterfront study. The typical organization was a morning session with the Technical Committee, afternoon sessions with the Task Force and evening public meetings. All meetings were open and all participants welcomed throughout the day's "charrette".

March 4, 1986:	Issues and Directions
March 18, 1986:	General Concepts
April 15, 1986:	Refined Concepts
May 13, 1986:	Comparative Evaluation
June 3, 1986:	Refined Plan

PROGRESS REPORTS

The following documents were produced during the study. They are separately bound and are considered a Technical Appendix:

- Issues/Directions Charrette Report 1 - March 10, 1986
- General Concepts Charrette Report 2 - March 25, 1986
- Refined Concepts Charrette Report 3 - April 21, 1986
- Comparative Evaluation Charrette Report 4 - May 19, 1986
- Recommended Development Plan Summary Briefing - June 3, 1986

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Waterfront Task Force

Hal Arnason, Jr., Chairman - Fourth Corner Development Group
Tut Asmundson, Commissioner - Port of Bellingham
Carl Nielson, Board Member - Fourth Corner Development Group
Tim Douglas, Mayor - City of Bellingham
Don Fleming, Executive Director - Port of Bellingham
Mark Asmundson - Bellingham City Councilperson
Dr. Robert Ross, President - Western Washington University
Georg Leshefka, Planning Commission Chairperson

Technical Committee

Bill Geyer, Planning Director - City of Bellingham
Ed Dahlgren, Manager of Engineering Service - Georgia-Pacific Corporation
Jeff Kaspar, Assistant Deputy - Port of Bellingham
Wayne Schwandt, Executive Director - Fourth Corner Development Group

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Vickie Matheson - City of Bellingham
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Mark Asmundson - City Council
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COST ESTIMATES

The following cost estimates are expressed in 1986 dollars and were derived using a unit cost bottom-up building-up approach. All estimates are rounded to the nearest thousandth including construction and costs plus expenses for additional items such as fees (architectural/ engineering), taxes, permits, outside consultants, overhead, and general contingencies.

The cost estimates portion is divided into two parts:

- Project Cost Summary by improvement item
- Detailed Project Costs by improvement item

PROJECT COST SUMMARY - BY ITEM

1.	Citizens Dock Partial Rehabilitation Upland at Maritime Heritage Center plus land acquisition	$ 517,000
2.	Public Waterfront Access	
	a. Pedestrian Stepped Deck	435,000
	b. Old Colony Wharf	634,000
	c. Public Viewpoint (between Roeder and Holly)	254,000
	d. Public Viewpoint (on Roeder; Old Citizens Dock site)	325,000
	e. Central Avenue Public Access	380,000
	Subtotal	$ 2,028,000

PROJECT COST SUMMARY - BY ITEM, continued

3.	Maritime Interpretive Center - variable dependent on type and extent of exhibits	$ 0
4.	Public Private Development Projects	
	a. Office Building (12,000 GSF) @ Dupont and D Street	1,159,000
	b. Retail Space on Holly between Bay and Central	864,000
5.	Consolidated Development Area - Costs not included	0
6.	Heavy Industrial Expansion - Costs not included	0
7.	Holly/Roeder Streetscape	
	a. Streetscaping	527,000
	b. Utilities	894,000
	c. Road Improvements at Railroad teaches turn widening/smoothing) at Holly and Roeder	12,000
8.	Holly Street Bridge and Gateway	288,000
9.	Intersection Improvements	
	a. Main Intersections (4) Roeder/F, Holly/F, Holly/D, Holly/Central	767,000
	b. Secondary Intersections (11)	1,164,000
10.	Chestnut/Roeder Realignment • Funding Assumption (60% public/40% private)	2,400,000
11.	D Street Improvements (widen from 1 to 2-way)	462,000

PROJECT COST SUMMARY - BY ITEM, continued

12.	Upland Pedestrian Linkages	
	a. Maritime Heritage Center	$ 71,000
	b. Broadway Overlook	55,000
		$ 126,000
13.	Parking (structured, 350 stalls on Holly Street south of Central) • Funding Assumption (50% public/50% private)	$ 3,305,000
14.- 17.	Non-Cost Items,; Complexity Zoning related, etc.	0
	Grand Total	$14,513,000

COST BREAKDOWN

- Private Portion
  - Office $1,159,000)
  - Retail 864,000) = $ 4,636,000
  - Parking 1,653,000)
  - Roeder Realignment 960,000)
- Public Portion = 9,877,000
  - Items #1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9
    10 (60%), 11, 12
    13 (50%)

Total $14,513,000

DETAILED PROJECT COSTS - BY ITEM

1. Citizens Dock

A full range of rehabilitation and new construction alternatives were examined for Citizens Dock (shown on the following page). Relocation and partial revaluation was the chosen alternative.

- Construction Cost = $34/sq. ft. x 10,220 sq. ft. = $347,480
- 20% Contingency = 69,496
- Land Purchase = $5/sq.ft.* x 20,000 sq.ft. = 100,000

Total $516,976

2.a. Pedestrian Stepped Deck (200' x 50')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Site Preparation		Lump Sum	$ 5,000
Pilings		Lump Sum	60,000
Decking and Framing: Tr. Wd.	10,000 sf	$10.50	105,000
Railing - Pipe	300 lf	20.00	6,000
Lights	25 ea	1,500	37,500
Potted Trees	50 ea	1,000	50,000
Benches	12 ea	500	6,000
Trash Cans	12 ea	250	3,000
Fire Sprinkler	10,000 sf	2.50	25,000
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Subtotal			$302,500
Construction Costs + 25%			$378,125
Project Cost + 15%			$434,844

* For estimation purposes only actual value will have to be determined by an MIA appraisal.

CITIZENS DOCK ALTERNATIVES
($000's)

Action	Construction Costs	+	Contingency	=	Project Costs (20%)
1. Do Nothing	Ø		Ø		Ø
2. Renovate In-Place					
• Full	$75/sf x 20,440 sf = $1,533		$307		$1,840
• Partial	$40/sf x 10,220 sf = $ 409		$ 82		$ 491
3. Demolish	$ 3/sf x 20,440 sf = $ 61		-		$ 61
4. Relocate Upland					
A. Full Rehab	$61/sf x 20,440 sf = $1,247		$249		$1,496
• Land Purchase	$ 5/sf x 20,000 sf = $ 100		-		100
					$1,596
B. Partial Rehab	$34/sf x 10,220 sf = $ 348		$ 69		$ 417
• Land Purchase	$ 5/sf x 20,000 sf = $ 100		-		100
					$ 517
C. Demo & New Full Replica (New Constr.)	$43/sf x 20,440 sf = $ 879		$176		$1,055
• Land Purchase	$ 5/sf x 20,000 sf = $ 100		-		100
					$1,155
D. Demo & New Partial (New Construction)	$28/sf x 10,220 sf = $ 286		$ 57		$ 343
• Land Purchase	$ 5/sf x 20,000 sf = $ 100		-		100
					$ 443

* Preliminary cost estimates are expected to vary ± 10-15%.

2.b. Old Colony Wharf (1,000' x 12')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Site Preparation		Lump Sum	$ 5,000
Pilings		Lump Sum	72,000
Decking and Framing: Tr. Wd.	12,000 sf	$10.50	126,000
Railing - Pipe	1,000 lf	20.00	20,000
Lights	50 ea	1,500	75,000
Potted Trees	50 ea	1,000	50,000
Benches	50 ea	500	25,000
Trash Cans	50 ea	250	12,500
Fire Sprinkler	12,000 sf	2.50	30,000
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Security Fence (10' tall)	1,000 lf	20	20,000
Subtotal			$441,000
Construction Costs + 25%			$551,250
Project Cost + 15%			$633,938

2.c. Public Viewpoint (between Roeder & Holly, 60' x 100')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Site Preparation		Lump Sum	$ 10,000
Pilings		Lump Sum	25,000
Decking and Framing: Tr. Wd.	6,000 sf	$10.50	63,000
Observation Tower (all wood-mtl roof-mtl railings)		Lump Sum	25,000
Railing	220 lf	20.00	4,400
Lights	10 ea	1,500	15,000
Potted Plants	10 ea	1,000	10,000
Benches	6 ea	500	3,000
Trash Cans	6 ea	250	1,500
Fire Sprinkler	6,000 sf	2.50	15,000
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Subtotal			$176,900
Construction Costs + 25%			$221,125
Project Cost + 15%			$254,294

2.d. Public Viewpoint (on Roeder/Old Citizens Dock site)
(100' x 22' + 400' x 8')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition		Lump Sum	$ 10,000
Pilings		Lump Sum	10,000
Decking and Framing: Tr. Wd.	5,400 sf	$20.00	108,000
Street Paving	1,000 sf	2.00	2,000
Walk Paving	4,400 sf	2.50	11,000
Curbs	500 lf	5.00	2,500
Railing	500 lf	20.00	10,000
Lights	25 ea	1,500	37,500
Potted Plants	12 ea	1,000	12,000
Benches	6 ea	500	3,000
Trash Cans	6 ea	250	1,500
Fire Sprinkler	5,400 sf	2.50	13,500
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Subtotal			$226,000
Construction Costs + 25%			$282,500
Project Cost + 15%			$324,875

2.e. Central Avenue Public Access

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition	20,000 sf	$1.00	$ 20,000
Piling-Upgrade Exist-Allowance		Lump Sum	50,000
Patch Existing Deck-Allowance		Lump Sum	6,000
New Paving	20,000 sf	3.00	60,000
Curbs	300 lf	6.00	1,800
Railing	580 lf	20.00	11,600
Lights	20 ea	1,500	30,000
Potted Plants	20 ea	1,000	20,000
Benches	10 ea	500	5,000
Trash Cans	10 ea	250	2,500
Fire Sprinkler	20,000 sf	2.50	50,500
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Subtotal			$264,400
Construction Costs + 25%			$330,500
Project Cost + 15%			$380,075

7.a. Holly/Roeder Street Streetscaping (12 blocks, 16' x 200'/each)

Description	Quantity	(Project Costs) Unit Costs	Total
Street Trees with Grates (6 trees/block x 12 blocks)	72 ea	$2,000	$144,000
Street Lighting (4/block x 12 blocks)	48 ea	3,450	165,600
Trash Cans (1/block alt. sides x 12 blks)	12 ea	414	4,968
Scored Paving	19,200 sf	5.52	105,984
Demolition	38,400 sf	2.76	105,984
			$526,536

7.b. Utilities (Power & Telephone Utility Lines)
- Relocate from above ground to buried
- 12 blocks at 200 ft/ea; power on one side, phone on other
- Includes manholes, excavation and backfill

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Remove Lines & Poles	7,200 lf	$20.00	$144,000
Replace Line & Bury	7,200 lf	$70.00	504,000
			$648,000
Construction Cost - 20%			$777,600
Project Cost - 15%			$894,240

4.a. Public Private Development - Office Building

Wood frame, stucco walls, built-up roof, stepped footings, ACT ceiling, carpet floor, minimum partitions, elevators, parking under building for 30 spaces

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition & Site Prep		Lump Sum	$ 10,000
Building	12,000 sf	$ 50	600,000
Parking	30 stalls	$6,500/stall	195,000
Subtotal			$805,000
Construction Costs + 20%			$966,000
Project Cost + 20%			$1,159,200

4.b. Retail Space

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Retail Space	12,000 sf	$ 50	$600,000
Construction Cost + 20%			$720,000
Project Cost + 20%			$864,000

7.c. "F" and Roeder: Smooth out road over tracks and widen turn

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Site Prep		Lump Sum	$ 2,000
New Pavement	1,600 sf	$ 3.00	4,800
Steel Rail to RRT	200 lf	7.50	1,500
Curb	70 lf	6.00	420
Subtotal			$ 8,720
Construction Cost + 20%			$ 10,464
Project Cost + 15%			$ 12,034

8. Holly Street Bridge and Gateway

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition		Lump Sum	$ 10,000
Upgrade Existing Structure		Lump Sum	15,000
Replace Decking		Lump Sum	6,000
Scored Concrete Paving w/brick	5,000 sf	$ 5.00	25,000
Street Lights: FOIC	40 ea	800	32,000
Flag Poles	10 ea	2,400	24,000
Bollards	80 ea	200	16,000
Potted Trees	20 ea	1,000	20,000
Walk Signals	4 ea	6,000	24,000
Trash Cans	10 ea	250	2,500
Concrete Railings	200 lf	30	6,000
Power		Lump Sum	10,000
Benches	20 ea	500	10,000
Life Safety Provisions	NIC		NIC
Fire Sprinklers	NIC		NIC
Subtotal			$200,500
Construction Costs + 25%			$250,625
Project Cost + 15%			$288,219

9.a. Intersection Improvements - Main Intersections (4 each)

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Per Intersection:			
Paving	2,000 sf	$ 2.50	$ 5,000
Demolition - scraping		Lump Sum	5,000
Curbs	400 lf	6.00	2,400
Scored Sidewalk Paving	1,500 sf	4.00	6,000
Brick & Concrete @ Crosswalks	2,560 sf	10.00	25,600
Handicap Ramp	8 ea	200	1,600
Striping		Lump Sum	700
Concrete Bollards	48 ea	200	9,600
Street Lights	8 ea	2,500	20,000
Walk Signal	4 ea	6,000	24,000
Trees w/Grates	24 ea	1,500	36,000
Trash Cans	4 ea	250	1,000
Utilities: Power		Lump Sum	2,000
Subtotal			$138,900
Construction Costs + 20%			$160,680
Project Cost + 15%			$191,682
			X 4 =
			$766,728

9.b. Secondary Intersections (11 each)

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Per Intersection:			
Demolition		Lump Sum	$ 5,000
Curbs	400 lf	$ 6.00	2,400
Sidewalks	1,500 sf	3.00	4,500
Paving	2,000 sf	2.50	5,000
Striping		Lump Sum	1,000
Concrete Bollards	24 ea	200	4,800
Trees w/Grates	12 ea	1,500	18,000
Walk Signals	4 ea	6,000	24,000
Street Light	4 ea	2,500	10,000
Power		Lump Sum	2,000
Subtotal			$ 76,700
Construction Costs + 20%			$ 92,040
Project Cost + 15%			$105,846
			X 11 =
			$1,164,306

10. Chestnut/Roeder Realignment $2,400,000

- Cost estimates from City of Bellingham Planning and Economic Development Department
- City assumes funding will be distributed as follows:
  - 60% public sector ($1,440,000)
  - 40% private sector ($960,000)

11. "D" Street Improvements (Widen from 25' to 66' x 1,000')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition/Site Prep	41,000 sf	$ 1.00	$ 41,000
Pavement-Asphalt	30,000 sf	1.50	45,000
Sidewalks - Concrete	20,000 sf	2.00	40,000
Curbs	2,000 lf	6.00	12,000
Street Trees	40 ea	1,500	60,000
Street Lighting	30 ea	2,500	75,000
Walk Signal	8 ea	6,000	48,000
Striping		Lump Sum	4,000
Power		Lump Sum	10,000
Subtotal			$335,000
Construction Costs + 20%			$402,000
Project Cost + 15%			$462,300

12.a. Upland Pedestrian Linkages - Maritime Heritage Center (Stair 100'x6')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Site Preparation		Lump Sum	$ 2,500
Stairs	600 sf	$15.00	9,000
Curbs	200 lf	15.00	3,000
Rail	200 lf	20.00	4,000
Lights	10 ea	1,500	15,000
Potted Trees	10 ea	1,000	10,000
Trash Cans	6 ea	250	1,500
Power		Lump Sum	6,500
Subtotal			$ 51,500
Construction Costs + 20%			$ 61,800
Project Cost + 15%			$ 71,070

12.b. Broadway Viewpoint (Area 50' x 50')

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition/Site Prep		Lump Sum	$ 2,000
AC Pavement	1,300 sf	$ 3.00	3,900
Concrete Pavement	600	4.00	2,400
Curbs - Curved	250 lf	10.00	2,500
Railing	50 sf	20.00	1,000
Retaining Wall 50'/4'	200 sf	15.00	3,000
Benches	4 ea	500	2,000
Trash Cans	4 ea	250	1,000
Lights	4 ea	1,500	6,000
Grass	600 sf	3.00	1,800
Trees w/Grate	6 ea	1,500	9,000
Power to Site		Lump Sum	5,000
Subtotal			$ 39,600
Construction Costs + 20%			$ 47,520
Project Cost + 15%			$ 54,648

13. Parking Structure

Description	Quantity	Unit Costs	Total
Demolition/Site Prep		Lump Sum	$ 20,000
Parking	350 stalls	$6,500/stall	2,275,000
Subtotal			$2,295,000
Construction Cost + 20%			$2,754,000
Project Cost + 20%			$3,304,800
Grand Total			$14,513,083

COST BREAKDOWN

- Private Portion
  - Office $1,159,000)
  - Retail 864,000) = $ 4,636,000
  - Parking 1,653,000)
  - Roeder Realignment 960,000)

- Public Portion = 9,877,000
  - Items #1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9
    10 (60%), 11, 12
    13 (50%)

Total $14,513,000

Figure 77

Alternatives for Citizens Dock

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS	TRADE-OFFS			
	Construction Cost Magnitude	Parking	Vehicular/Pedestrian/ Shoreline Access	Historical Impact
1. Do Nothing	No Cost; continuing cost exposure postponed to future	No change from existing conditions	Reduced access as building/deck deteriorates	Eventual deterioration to extent beyond salvage; historical building loss
2. Renovate In Place				
A. FULL	$75/square foot; High Cost; questionable condition of pilings and structure	Potential for small amount of on-site parking	Increased pedestrian and shoreline access; continued restrictions for vehicular access; greater vehicular/pedestrian conflicts	Full preservation/ restoration of landmark
B. PARTIAL	$40/square foot; Moderate Cost but depends on existing physical conditions and amount restored	Potential for small amount of on-site parking	Increased pedestrian and shoreline access; continued restrictions for vehicular access	Destroys pure preservation/ restoration of landmark
3. Demolish	$3/square foot; Low Cost; increased costs if dredge waterway	No on-site parking unless improved with Roeder Bridge upgrades	Access eliminated	Significant impact with building loss

TRADE-OFFS				SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION
Economic Impact	Land Use Compatibility	Waterway Viability	Urban Design/Aesthetics	
Question of needed public safety upgrades/City liability and potentially high public fiscal loss	No people/industry conflicts but vacant use creates dis-incentive to area investment	Limited public use and continuation of restricted industrial use	Poor, visual blight, creates image of neglect	Not Recommended
Qualifies for investment tax credits; ongoing costs/revenues depend on use (commercial vs. public)	Possible conflicts of concentrated people activity with heavy industry	Direct public access; same existing limit on industrial use	Creates quality activity center within industry dominated area	Not Recommended
May not qualify for investment tax credits; potential operating costs/ benefits proportional to space/use	Possible conflicts of people activity with heavy industry	Some increased area of waterway for marine use; direct public access	Creates quality activity center within industry dominated area	Recommended Third Choice
Eliminates liability; no operating costs for positive fiscal impact	Good compatibility with all industrial waterfront activity	Waterway available for deep water marine functions with upland visual links	Eliminates historical element but opens waterway vista	Recommended Fourth Choice

Figure 77

Alternatives for Citizens Dock (cont)

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS	TRADE-OFFS			
	Construction Cost Magnitude	Parking	Vehicular/Pedestrian/ Shoreline Access	Historical Impact
4. Relocate Upland				
A. FULL REHABILITATION	$61/square foot ($56/sf construction + $5/sf demolition); High Cost; poor soil condition will increase foundation costs	No parking at existing dock; surface lots nearby within Maritime Heritage Center; building consumes large land area	Improved vehicular and pedestrian access; increased shoreline access of creek but less at waterway	Destroys original historic location attributes but retains landmark facsimile
B. PARTIAL REHABILITATION	$34/square foot ($30/ sf construction + $4/sf demolition); Moderate Cost but depends on salvage/ new construction amounts	No parking at existing dock; surface lots nearby within Maritime Heritage Center	Increased shoreline access of creek but less at waterway	Destroys original building character and location values; historic remembrance
C. DEMOLISH AND FULL REPLICA (New Construction)	$43/square foot ($40/ sf construction + $3/ sf demolition); Moderate Cost; some cost savings with modern materials/techniques	No parking at existing dock; surface lots nearby within Maritime Heritage Center	Increased shoreline access of creek but less at waterway	Similar building at different location; not historic preservation but copy
D. DEMOLISH AND PARTIAL REPLICA (New Construction)	$28/square foot ($25/ sf construction + $3/ sf demolition); Moderate Cost depending on building size and materials	No parking at existing dock; surface lots nearby within Maritime Heritage Center	Increased shoreline access of creek but less at waterway	Not preservation but "ghost" of lost landmark

TRADE-OFFS				SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION
Economic Impact	Land Use Compatibility	Waterway Viability	Urban Design/Aesthetics	
No historic preservation fiscal benefits; lower costs; potential revenues depend on use (commercial vs. public)	Good compatibility but requires large amount of land	Waterway available for deep water marine functions with upland visual links	Possible scale/dominance problems in park; opens waterway awareness	Not Recommended
No historic preservation fiscal benefits; lower costs; potential revenues depend on use (commercial vs. public)	Good compatibility with public/recreational emphasis	Waterway available for deep water marine functions with upland visual links	Opens waterway vista; historic image retained	Recommended First Choice
No historic preservation fiscal benefits; lower costs; potential revenues depend on use (commercial vs. public)	Good compatibility but requires large amount of land	Waterway available for deep water marine functions with upland visual links	Possible scale/dominance problems in park; opens waterway awareness	Not Recommended
No historic preservation fiscal benefits; lower costs; potential revenues depend on use (commercial vs. public)	Good compatibility	Waterway available for deep water marine functions with upland visual links	Opens waterway vista; good site fit	Recommended Second Choice

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