

Fall 2006

FERNDALE CONNECTION

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2095 Main Street - Ferndale, Washington 98248

Protecting Your Drinking Water

What if you opened a water tap and got something other than clean, safe water? The City of Ferndale works to ensure that you receive safe drinking water at your home or business every time you open your tap. As your water purveyor, you can expect that we go to great lengths to treat and purify your water before it is delivered to you. However, you may not be aware that we also expend a great deal of effort to protect the water we make from the possibility of contamination or pollution as it flows *through* our distribution system.

Drinking water can become contaminated. This can happen by accident, through hazardous connections to the piping system known as cross connection. Without proper protection devices, something as useful as your garden hose has the potential to poison your home's water supply. In fact, over half of the nation's cross-connections involve unprotected garden hoses.

A cross-connection is a permanent or temporary piping arrangement that can allow your drinking water to be contaminated if a backflow condition occurs. What is "backflow" you may ask? It's just what it sounds like; the water is flowing in the opposite direction from its normal flow. With the direction of flow reversed due to a change in pressures, backflow can allow contaminants to enter our drinking water system through cross-connections.

A potentially hazardous cross-connection occurs every time someone uses a garden hose sprayer to apply insecticides or herbicides to their lawn. Another cross-connection occurs when someone uses his or her garden hose to clear a stoppage in their sewer line. Without a backflow prevention device between your hose and hose bib, spigot or outside faucet, the contents of the hose and anything it is connected to can backflow into the piping system and contaminate your drinking water.

This hazardous situation sometimes can affect more than a single home. In one instance, an entire town had to be rationed drinking water from National Guard water trucks while the town's water distribution system was flushed and disinfected following contamination by a pesticide. An investigation into the situation determined that two residents spraying the pesticides had made direct cross-connections to their homes. A backflow condition had occurred, sucking the chemical through the home piping systems and out into the town's water distribution system.

Because we want to continue to provide you with the best possible drinking water, the City of Ferndale has a series of ordinances currently in place that deal with many aspects of cross connection control to protect your water supply. To increase the level of protection, City staff members are now developing a full program to address all aspects of cross connection control. The program will be presented to the State Department of Health for approval and to City Council for final approval before implementation.

We ask that you help us to preserve the quality of our drinking water supply. If at any time you notice a change in the look, smell or taste of your drinking water from the City of Ferndale, please contact our Public Works Department at (360) 384-4006.

COLOR DOMINATES THE HARD WOODS OF THE HILLS AND MOUNTAIN SIDES AND THE SEASON CHANGES

Fall is in the air, when the frost hits the pumpkins and the roofs are a frosty white color because the temperatures has dipped to the freezing level on a night or two. One of those happened this past weekend and probably others depending on where we live in and around the City. Yes fall is in the air and we will soon turn our clocks back to our winter hours to provide a bit more daylight to the children going to school in the mornings.

In the summer edition of the newsletter we provided some updates about the activity level in the City and the quantity of work that is being accomplished. The work level goes on and we continue to make good progress on all of the projects that the City is involved with. Several have been completed with a great deal of success.

One of those completed projects is the **Community Visioning** meetings and follow-up Committee meetings. The City is now working towards the implementation process of all the creative and progressive recommendations that were the culmination of those meetings. There are a number of interesting positions on Boards, Commissions and Committees to be filled and the notices for those are included on the City web site at www.cityofferndale.org. If you are interested in serving your Community there are a variety of activities to participate in, so please do consider being part of the many challenges and opportunities facing our community.

The fall term of the **City of Ferndale University** has been scheduled for the last three Tuesdays in October and the first three Tuesdays in November. There is still time for you to sign up if you are interested in how city government operates. These informational classes have been very successful and in demand so consider attending now or for the next session that will be in the early spring of 2007.

The Sports Complex **irrigation project** is in full swing. We have an ongoing need for any and all volunteers who can spend a few hours on a Saturday to help put the irrigation system in the ground. No experience is necessary just a willing person and time. Come to the Sports Complex at the south end of Second Avenue and we'll put you to work on the morning's tasks. We will be at this till well into November and hopefully some great weather will be available to us. Come on out and enjoy working with a great group of volunteers and get to know your neighbors. The project will continue as long as the weather permits and will start again in the spring.

Time grows near for the beginning of our Centennial Celebration. It will be a year long opportunity for all of us to **HONOR OUR PAST AND CELEBRATE OUR FUTURE**. We are accepting offers of citizens to volunteer for a number of activities that are in the planning stages and we can use more people to lead and help with the activities. Give me a call at City Hall and we can work out a way for you to contribute you talents to this year long celebration.

The City will begin a process of dealing with what the City will develop into over the next 20 years. We have named the process **Ferndale 20-20**, and the number one priority on the list is transportation issues. The city will be asking citizens to come to a series of meetings over several months in early 2007 to share or review ideas for new and/or improved roads, trails, parks, city infrastructure such as new roads or other capital improvement projects such as new buildings for our Library and Police Station.

As you may know the City was given a **donation of one million dollars for a new library** facility from an anonymous donor. The project is under consideration by the City Council and a "needs assessment" will be conducted in the coming months. The Friends of the Library are very supportive of the potential for a new facility due to the lack of available space for all the patrons and the lack of parking at the existing facility. The present building is nearing 15 years of age, is in good usable condition with some minor improvements but does not possess the space for the current number of users from the Community. You will hear a great deal more regarding this opportunity over the next couple of months.

The need for a **Police Facility** is one that has existed for many years. The space our Police Department currently occupies lacks the requirements to be a safe and complete Law and Justice Center. The City Council approved an option to purchase an existing building as soon as the existing lease expires. The design for a new facility will begin in the next few months and when the building is purchased the project will move forward. There will be plenty of opportunities for citizens to provide input into the design and use of the facility thru the Police Advisory Commission. Stay tuned in for the next step.

If you have questions of what is going on in your City please feel free to contact the Mayor or the City Administrator and we will help with any issues that you may have or needs to make changes in our City government.

One last item: Ferndale Golden Eagles have just passed an important milestone in their quest for perfection. They have now won 20 games in a row. That is a Washington State record for continuous wins. Friday night Football is a fun activity on these pleasant fall evenings. Come on out to Ferndale Memorial Stadium and cheer them on.

See you in the stands.

Jerry Landcastle, Mayor

City of Ferndale



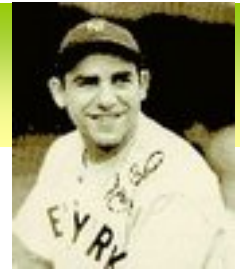
As the City approaches its 100-year anniversary next year, the Police Department renews its commitment to providing outstanding public service to a growing residential, business and industrial population. Having just completed a top to bottom review of its management and operations by a team of senior law enforcement leaders from around the State under the aegis of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC), the Police Department now embarks on the demanding task of bringing its polices and procedures in compliance with the standards required for Accreditation. The dedicated men and women of the Police Department are continually exploring ways of improving the delivery of public safety services to the citizens of Ferndale, including such initiatives as our website, www.ferndalepd.org, which contains innumerable tips on disaster preparedness, personal safety, links to essential services and useful statistical data bases. We value out community's ideas and opinions regarding public safety issues and an important component of staying in touch with our shareholders is the newly created Police Advisory Commission, whose five members are appointed by the Mayor in consultation with the Chief of Police. We are grateful to Ms. Susan Cole, Ms. Mary Kanikeberg, Mr. William Payne, Pastor Philip Petrasek and Mr. Elie Samuel for their service to the community as members of this Commission and we look forward to working closely with them as we continue to fulfill our proud and distinguished heritage of professional excellence.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT NEWS

New Location for the Drive-Up Drop Box for Utility Bills

The City has moved the drop box for utility bills. New offices and a conference room are being constructed at the old bank drive up lanes, therefore the need for the new drop box location.

It is located in the City Hall parking lot at the end of the interior sidewalk, near the old Dimitri's restaurant. You can't miss it! Save a stamp, consolidate car trips and drop off your payment today!



Ramblings from the City Administrator

Yogi Berra once famously said “When you come to the fork in the road, take it”. While his logic was unique, his wisdom transcends these witticisms. We all face forks in the road throughout our life. Some have little impact on our future while others take us on truly new adventures.

It could be that Ferndale is at one of these dynamic forks in the road. We are no longer the sleepy rural small town north of Bellingham. Ferndale has been discovered – Ferndale is open - to reuse the phrase that was common during the Main Street Project. What our town will look like in the next decade and beyond is unknown. What is known however is that many of our citizens have recently asked and potentially answered this important question.

Over the last few months, the City Council has embarked on a community-wide visioning process to discover what our citizens thought Ferndale should look like in 20 years (and beyond). The results are impressive. Our neighbors have envisioned a Ferndale that is, among other things, rich in park lands, has a vibrant pedestrian dominated downtown, and is welcoming to new ideas and diverse backgrounds. They have envisioned Ferndale as a truly great city.

Now the work begins. Taking a vision and translating it into reality takes hard work, patience, and a fair amount of planning and money. Will Ferndale look exactly like we have visioned it in 20 years? Probably not but one thing is sure – the City Council has shown great resolve and foresight by asking these tough questions.

I've often asked myself “what makes a great city?” Not a good city or a nice city but a great city. When I think of all of the cities I have visited, have seen pictures of, or have merely heard of, what makes some of them great? It may be emblematic of the sad state of my life but this is something I have spent a considerable amount of time contemplating. It is an occupational hazard. When I'm on vacation, I take as many pictures of cool trash cans and light poles as I do stunning vistas.

Take a moment (I'll wait) and think of some of the cities you consider great – what makes them great? What about them puts them into this separate and special category? Is it where they physically are? Is it the activities they provide? Is it the attitude of the people who live there? What makes them great?

In the year 2000, the citizens of Melbourne Australia (on my list of great cities) were asked this question as they struggled with defining their future. Here is their list of the attributes of a great city:

Built Environment

- Balance of built & natural
- Scale buildings to people
- Melding of environments
- No slums
- Decent housing options
- Museums & galleries
- Libraries
- Good housing
- Educational opportunities

Physical Environment

- Gardens
- Open spaces, parks
- Attractive spaces
- Clear air
- No pollution
- Plenty of trees
- Clean waterways
- Recreational facilities
- Great public spaces

Lifestyle & Society

- Choices of lifestyles
- Social inclusion
- Sense of community
- Multiculturalism
- Sense of history/heritage
- Sense of safety for all people
- Economic sustainability
- Tolerance
- Democracy
- Good government
- Friendly people
- Culture

Public Transportation

- Access
- Efficient
- Option to cars
- Frequent & safe

Bike paths for commuting

Author Joel Kotkin in his book "The City: A Global History", chronicled the evolution of cities from Mesopotamia to New York and has simplified what makes a great city into three categories. They are:

Creation Of Sacred Space – a sense of identity – the place means something to people. You're making a choice to be someplace because you consider it worth it. He uses the example of people who chose to live in New York City post 9/11.

The Provision of Basic Security – you have to have security. Many large cities are considered unsafe. The cities with a greater sense of security flourish while those that are considered unsafe decline.

Host for a Commercial Market – a great city must have a thriving economy. He decries those that think that if you build a convention center and an art museum you will have a bunch of cool, hip young people living in lofts and saving your city. He emphasizes that great cultural life is a result of great commercial life, not the other way around.

Thus, for Kotkin what you need for a great city is "Meaning", "Safety" and "Commerce".

I'm not sure if there is a single aspect of a city that makes it great or even if there are essential ingredients. I think it is a combination of all of these factors that together makes a difference. I also realize that what I might consider a great city might not be high on someone else's list. It is probably subjective.

Having given this some thought, I've also come to realize that the things that might make a city great (super educational system, excellent health care, stunning natural surroundings, open and tolerant citizens) sometimes do not transcend into the issues that City Council's and citizens grapple with on a daily and annual basis.

Almost every city I put into the "great" category have traffic issues, they have parking limitations, and they have taxes every bit as high as other non-great cities. Even with these issues and limitations they have been able to craft a city that stands above their peers. Somehow they have created a great city.

If you are interested in making Ferndale even greater than it is now, I encourage you to add your voice to those who have responded to the City Council's call for a conversation with our citizens. If you think we should do more, lets us know. If you think we should do less, lets us know.

Should you like to add your thoughts to what makes a great city, please feel free to email me at cityadmin@ci.ferndale.wa.us. Sometimes great cities are created, sometimes they happen on their own. Most times it is a combination of planning and good circumstances.

Such is our task. We have before us a few forks in the road. Now we need to take them. I wonder what Yogi would do?

Construction activity has been off a bit from last years' breakneck pace. Nevertheless, construction is still continuing at a level that requires our Building staff to work regular overtime in order to meet our response time commitments for inspections and plan checking. Their dedication over the last few years has been extraordinary. Construction may be off somewhat, but our new Permit Specialist is still processing and issuing permits for construction at about the same pace as last year. With so many people still applying for building permits, we are not anticipating a significant drop-off in the level of construction for 2007. By way of update, we have issued 132 permits for new single-family homes, 13 permits for new apartments, and 6 permits for new commercial or industrial developments.

Another indicator of future development is the number of applications we receive for land division, and we have received many more of those this year than last. We have received 20 plat applications so far this year, which is twice the number as all last year. Together with PUD's, Conditional Use Permits, and applications for multi-family, commercial, and industrial site development, the number of these "current planning" applications is yet another indicator that development and construction in Ferndale is likely to continue at a relatively high level for some time to come. The Planning staff has been challenged during 2006 with keeping up with this increased workload while also continuing to make progress on the "long-range planning" front. They have certainly gone beyond the call of duty this year in order to maintain our high level of quality and service.

Of course, the 900-pound gorilla in the current planning arena is the pending application for the Pioneer Plaza shopping center. That review process continues with Planning staff having completed a "scoping" process meant to determine the environmental issues to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that the city has required. Shortly, a consultant will be hired to complete the EIS, which could take several months. Once the environmental process has concluded, the application will be scheduled for public hearings and decision. We'll keep you informed.

Winding up a couple of years of first-class work by the Planning staff, the City Council recently adopted ordinances that created two new zones

in the downtown area. Together with the adoption of site development and architectural design guidelines, the creation of these new zones promotes a vision of a more flourishing downtown. This vision began with the development and adoption of the Riverfront Plaza and Trail Plan, the Landscape Ordinance, and Design Requirements for Large-Scale Retail Buildings last year. These are significant achievements, but it is not the end of the work. The Council has expressed concern with how parking in the downtown will be accommodated in the future, and the Planning Commission has asked the Planning staff to begin working on a study of downtown parking solutions. Time and resources permitting, our Planning staff will tackle that project during 2007.

The process of accomplishing a technical update of the Comprehensive Plan continues on schedule. The Planning Commission continues an accelerated meeting schedule in order to complete the work by year' end, after which it will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration. We anticipate that the City Council will adopt the update early in the first quarter of 2007. Following the technical update of the Comp Plan, the city will begin the 20/20, or subarea planning program which is aimed at producing detailed subarea plans for various parts of the Urban Growth Area. Information regarding the current Comp Plan technical update is available on the city's website, including a Planning Commission meeting schedule for the remainder of the year.

Finally, after almost 8 years the Department of Ecology has agreed to formally accept our updated Shoreline Master Program for review and (hopefully) approval. Formal acceptance of the document for review by DOE is a huge step forward, and we currently await their response with crossed fingers.

That's all for now. Give us a call if you want to know more about our operations.

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan identified and analyzed six transportation alternatives that were the subject of a study conducted in 1994 by Michael Birdsall. This study was based on a traffic plan prepared in 1972. Both Plans focused on providing alternatives for east-west access to I-5.

Six Transportation Plan Alternatives were considered during the preparation of the 1994 Transportation Plan and incorporated into the 1996 Comprehensive Plan. The same six Plan Alternatives were re-analyzed for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update project. They are:

- A. Thornton Road Extension West of I-5
- B. Thornton Road Overcrossing of I-5
- C. Washington Street Upgrade
- D. Main Street/Alder Street Couplet
- E. Church Road South Extension
- F. Smith Road Interchange

The cost estimates for each Alternative was also updated for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan.

A brief discussion of each Transportation Plan Alternative is as follows:

A. Thornton Road Extension West of I-5 – This is an at-grade crossing of the railroad tracks and follows the west side of I-5 to reach Portal Way just south of the existing interchange area. It is nearly as effective as the overcrossing alternative (option B, below) in reducing traffic on Main Street and in the downtown area. However, this cost may need to be significantly increased due to construction through wetlands, obtaining access to abutting lands and the proximity of the corridor's intersection with the freeway interchange. Finally, and most importantly, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has closed the Thornton Road railroad crossing at the request of the Washington State Department of Transportation and AMTRAK in order to support the High Speed Rail Program. This option is not feasible, unless the crossing is re-opened at some future time.

A modified Thornton Road extension project, which calls for an overcrossing of the railroad tracks but not I-5, is listed on the current six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). Construction costs are estimated at \$10.3 million (2006 dollars).

B. Thornton Overcrossing Alternative – The Thornton Road overcrossing creates a strong link between Northwest Ferndale and the retail-commercial district that will develop along Portal Way in the next 20 years. Some shopping trips and other personal business trips will shift away from the downtown Main Street corridor or other

regional markets to the Portal Way area. With the Thornton Road overcrossing the future traffic volumes in the Main Street corridor nevertheless remain about the same as existing. The retail businesses in those established areas will continue to serve a major market share related to residential growth along Main Street east of I-5 and west of downtown Ferndale, but much of the residential growth in Northwest Ferndale will favor the emerging Portal Way commercial district. From a purely traffic perspective, this situation represents a more efficient situation, with more access and circulation options for all Ferndale residents.

Thornton Road itself would need to be upgraded to a three-lane section with additional turn pockets at the Malloy Road and Vista Drive intersections. The design should include sidewalks and widened curb lanes for bicycle movements. Transit service should be considered for this corridor.

Portal Way would need a three-lane cross section from the I-5 interchange north of Thornton Road. The intersection of Portal Way and Thornton Road would need to be signalized. On those portions of Malloy Road south of Thornton Road, traffic volumes would be sharply reduced. Similarly, the Thornton Road overcrossing would draw traffic away from Vista Drive. Traffic volumes on Church Road would be increased slightly, but not beyond the appropriate level for a collector road to serve. Minor traffic control changes and left-turn pockets would be needed at some intersections. Only minor improvements would be required on Main Street in the downtown area.

The cost to construct this Plan Alternative is estimated to be \$44.6 million (2006 dollars).

C. Washington Street Upgrade – Washington Street provides an existing path from Northwest Ferndale to reach the Portal Way interchange with I-5, but is little used for that purpose at present due to slow average speed and the psychological appearance of requiring “out-of-direction” travel. Through movements could be served at higher speed by improving the railroad crossing and upgrading existing Washington Street west of 2nd Avenue, upgrading South Portal Way, and creating a similarly designed connection from 2nd Avenue to South Portal Way via either Somerset Street, Washington Street or Eaton Street. However, this strategy was found to reduce future traffic growth on Main Street only a small amount, and provides no relief for Vista Drive. Higher traffic volumes across the railroad t

racks and near the High School are in themselves adverse impacts. While the alternative is feasible to construct at moderate cost, it was rejected when analyzed in 1994 for lack of major benefits to the citywide system. The cost to construct this Plan Alternative is estimated to be \$3.0 million (2006 dollars).

D. Main/Alder Couplet Alternative – This alternative continues the city's total reliance on Main Street as its primary east-west corridor to I-5. Traffic volumes within the corridor are maximized, and volumes are higher on most connecting roads to and through downtown Ferndale than is the case with the Thornton Road overcrossing alternative. In the Thornton Road area, however, traffic volumes are lower. With this alternative, no new access routes are developed for use in case of severe floods. The changeover to a one-way couplet in the downtown may alter the economic perspective for existing businesses and buildings along Main Street and Alder Street.

The I-5 overcrossing must be expanded from two lanes to a five- or six-lane configuration, to account for through movements and major turning volumes at the interchange. Signalization of the LaBounty/Main Street intersection should be coordinated with the signals controlling the interchange ramp intersections. Access points on Main Street from adjacent commercial properties in this area should continue to be minimized, focusing access movements on the signalized intersections or restricting driveway turns to right-in and right-out movements only. The new bridge across the Nooksack River provides the two-lane eastbound extension on Alder Street, which would be reconstructed from the bridge westward to Main Street at 4th Avenue to provide a high-capacity major arterial travel surface, with two lanes plus turn lanes and/or curb parking; similar to what currently exists on Main Street.

West of the downtown, the volumes on Main Street are considerably higher under this alternative. Additional improvements are necessary to support this through traffic, from Sterling Avenue to Church Road. Traffic volumes on Thornton Road east of Vista Drive would remain close to existing low levels under this alternative. Thornton Road west of Vista Drive would need to be improved to meet standards for a two-lane collector. Portal Way would have lower traffic volumes than projected under the Thornton Road overcrossing alternative; however, a five-lane configuration may be warranted if commercial area turn movements

are sufficiently heavy. Traffic volumes are increased on Washington Street, Malloy Road and Vista Drive under this alternative.

Signalization would be needed at the Washington/Vista Drive and Washington/3rd Avenue intersections. Traffic volumes would be slightly decreased on Church Road under this alternative.

The cost to construct this Plan Alternative is estimated to be \$40.9 million (2006 dollars). Adding the associated upgrades to Vista Drive, Malloy Road and Washington Street will comprise \$6.6 million of this cost estimate.

E. Church Road South Extension – The extension of Church Road from Main Street southward was investigated to provide an alternate access route to/from the Bellingham area and avoiding downtown Ferndale. This provides some traffic from Northwest Ferndale with a direct path to Slater Road and I-5, via Ulrick Road and Imhoff Road. At an estimated cost of \$1.3 million in 1992, this project would reduce future traffic on Main Street by an estimated 7% (1992), diverted mostly from areas north and west of the Church/Main Street intersection. It provides no relief to Vista Drive and may require acquisition and relocation of one or more of the new homes on the south side of Main Street opposite existing Church Road. The route south of Douglas Road is predominantly in the flood plain. The project was abandoned when analyzed in 1992 for lack of sufficient benefits; however, since completion of the 1992 study, sections of Church Road have been identified to be constructed by developers in support of new growth in the area. Additionally, the Lummi Nation has secured federal grant funding to reconstruct a portion of Slater Road that would bring it above the flood plain. Completion of this project would significantly increase the benefits associated with this project. The project is listed in the current six-year TIP, although it is not expected to receive funding in the current cycle.

The cost to the City to construct this Plan Alternative is estimated to be \$500,000 (Public Works Director estimate, in 2006 dollars).

F. Smith Road Interchange – Addition of an interchange on I-5 at Smith Road is of interest to Whatcom County for reasons of access eastward from that point. It would be beneficial to Ferndale only to improve freeway access for industrial lands along LaBounty Road and Barrett Avenue. It provides no relief to Main Street through downtown Ferndale, or across the Nooksack River, or to Vista Drive. It can, however, relieve

Main Street/I-5 interchange area, by drawing substantial volumes from Main Street along Hovander Road and/or LaBounty Drive to Smith Road. It is therefore a partial substitute for widening the I-5 overcrossing at Main Street, but does not provide a solution to east-west access issues from Northwest Ferndale.

The Smith Road interchange attracts considerable volume via Hovander Road. Additional use of Hovander Road is not a desirable situation, since it complicates the operation of the Main Street/Hovander Road intersection, forces upgrading of Hovander Road and adds significant new traffic volumes to the Hovander Road railroad crossing and the pair of close-coupled right-angle turns on each side of the railroad tracks.

This project was omitted from further consideration during the analysis conducted in 1994 as it provides no benefit to east-west access for Northwest Ferndale in the next 20 years. It could still be added to the system for reasons of importance to Whatcom County, or for adequacy beyond the 20-year planning horizon, and/or if widening of the I-5 overcrossing at Main Street is not feasible. For the last reason, it has special merit in combination with the Thornton Road extension alternatives. If this interchange is constructed, Ferndale should encourage traffic between Smith Road and Main Street to use LaBounty Drive rather than Hovander Road, and strongly consider closing the railroad crossing on Hovander Road. This project could relieve traffic congestion on Main Street if the Pioneer Plaza development is constructed.

The cost of the Smith Road interchange project alone is estimated to be at least \$3 million (2006 dollars).

Transportation-related Issues Brought Forward at the Community Visioning Workshops

Approximately one in five of the issues identified by the citizens who attended the two Community Visioning Workshops held in June 2005 are transportation and traffic-related. The issues identified are:

1. Alternative access routes in and out of the city
2. Another river crossing
3. Inadequate (existing) transportation network
4. Additional freeway interchange
5. More opportunities/connections with existing traffic network
6. Downtown traffic congestion
7. Need more parking downtown
8. A more complete sidewalk system/need for sidewalks, improve quality of sidewalks

By far the largest issue identified was "alternative access routes in and out of the city." Eighty-seven percent of the citizens who responded to the workshop activity identified this issue as being significant. I surmise that this response is due in large part to the high numbers of Ferndale residents who commute to employment sites in Bellingham. Transportation-related comments received at the visioning workshops centered principally on the lack of adequate transportation facilities (especially from the downtown area to the freeway), providing measures to encourage economic development in the downtown area, and construction of sidewalks. An ancillary issue discussed (principally at the second workshop) was the proposed Pioneer Plaza/Mall project and the impact that additional commercial development may have on the transportation network, especially on Main Street west of the freeway into the downtown core area. Some recurring comments received are outlined below. Transportation-network specific comments:

Church Road needs improvement before much additional development occurs in this area.

Church Road should be extended southward to Slater Road.

Thornton Road should be extended to an interchange with I-5; improve access and connections from downtown area to Portal Way and I-5, as current alternate route through town is poor and too slow.

Construct an interchange at Smith Road and I-5 to relieve expected increase in traffic on Main Street as a result of future commercial development east of the freeway.

Additional freeway interchanges needed (perhaps at Aldergrove and/or Grandview).

Improvements are needed on Main Street between I-5 and the downtown and residential areas.

Improve the intersection at Vista and Malloy.

Better access is needed to the athletic fields at Ferndale High School.

Improve the railroad crossing at Washington and Second.

Build second bridge in line with Alder Street ("couplet" idea); the Main Street Bridge has access constraints.

Improve Main and Douglas intersection.

Complete the Sunset Avenue to Smith Road project. The 90 degree turns on the route are not a good design to accommodate future transportation needs.

Widen Slater Road west of the freeway.

Provide sidewalks on Church, west side of Vista north of Thornton, Malloy, Ferndale Terrace, and on Main Street. Provide sidewalk



continuity citywide. Provide better pedestrian amenities.

Provide bike paths with road improvement. Bike routes should be developed throughout the city.

Develop better public transit.

Route NW residential population north to Grandview to connect to I-5.

Comments relative to the Downtown area:

Better (more) parking in the downtown core; develop a parking plan and public parking lots for downtown.

Create a more viable downtown; create historic district (common architectural theme).

Congestion on Main Street; coordinate traffic signals.

Main Street Bridge: single access point; consider one-way couplet; need another way out of downtown (see similar comment in Transportation section, above).

Plant trees downtown.

Develop Riverfront Trail to link Vanderyacht Park and Pioneer Park – with a pedestrian bridge to Hovander Park.

Make downtown a vibrant pedestrian-orientated area that celebrates the waterfront and which promotes downtown economic development.