

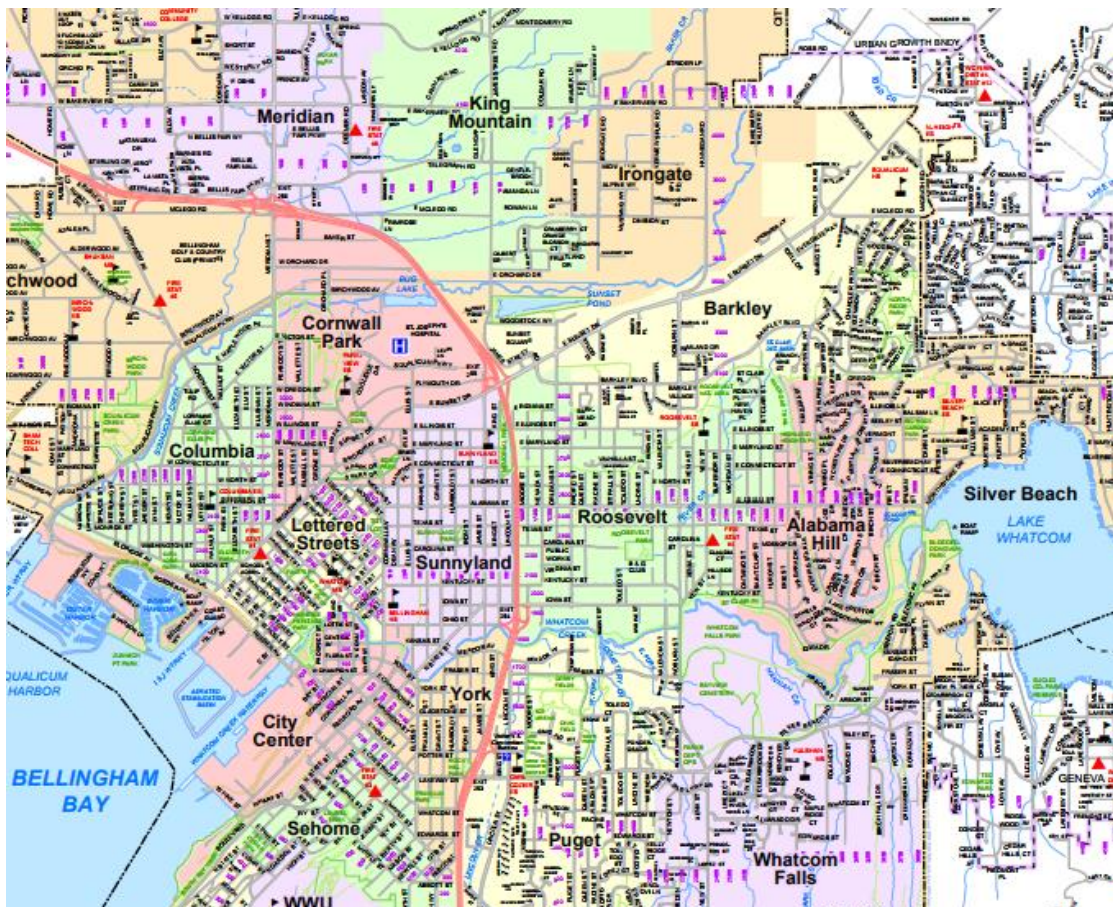


BELLINGHAM, WA AREA INFORMATION

Located amid the green islands of the Washington coast and the majestic peak of Mt. Baker, Bellingham is a cozy community shared by about 86,000 people. Less than 20 miles south of Canada, Bellingham boasts one of the grandest natural harbors in the northwest, able to dock the largest ocean vessels. As a commerce hub for the region, this harbor town has a healthy economy, gorgeous natural beauty, and some of the friendliest locals around.

Transportation

Map



Courtesy of [City of Bellingham](#)

Ground Transport

The [Whatcom Transportation Authority](#) is the local bus system in Bellingham with over 30 routes linking Whatcom County communities. Various shuttles offer services to major air and water transport locations, and [Amtrak](#) connects Bellingham with north and southbound trains departing daily. Rental cars are available through [Avis](#), [Budget](#), [Enterprise](#), and [Hertz](#). Taxi cabs and [Uber](#) also operate throughout the city. Parking is generally available in Bellingham, and bikes are welcome along many major roads.

Air Transport

[Bellingham International Airport](#) hosts airlines that fly daily or frequently to Seattle, Las Vegas, Portland, Maui and Kona, Palm Springs, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, Mesa/Phoenix, and San Juan Islands. Note that as of January 2018, existing Washington driver's licenses are not sufficient identification to fly in the United States, but the new [enhanced driver licenses](#) will allow such travel.

Water Transport

The [Port of Bellingham](#) operates a number of the transportation connections within Whatcom Country, including the airport, marinas, cruise terminal, and Fairhaven Station, where Amtrak train and bus services are located. Bellingham is the southern port of the [Alaska Ferry](#).

Schools

Generally, to register your child for school you will need to have a passport and/or birth certificate, proof of immunizations, any applicable past school records and proof of residency. Most public schools have boundary areas, and you must show proof (i.e. copy of lease or home purchase agreement) to be allowed to register in that particular school. Please always confirm requirements with the school you are interested in before assuming that your child will be able to attend that school.

Grade level in the public school system is determined by the age of the child. Typically, the child must be 5 years old by September 1st to enter kindergarten. School districts may be very strict about the age requirement, but inquire with the school district you are interested in to determine if there are any exemptions for foreign students who are ahead in grade level. You may also want to ask about any gifted or advanced programs as well as their English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs. Some elementary schools also offer a pre-Kindergarten program for children who miss the September 1st requirement. You may inquire at the school districts for availability.

Contact your IOR Destination Services Consultant for more assistance with schooling questions.

Public, Private, and Preschools

A complete listing of public schools in Bellingham can be viewed [here](#).

A complete listing of private schools in the Bellingham area can be viewed [here](#).

A directory of preschools in the Bellingham area can be viewed [here](#).

Additional Resources

- www.greatschools.org
- www.eschoolprofile.com
- www.schooltree.org

Colleges/Universities

- [Colleges and universities near Bellingham](#)



Courtesy of [Johnson Team](#)

Recreation

Listed below are a few of the attractions offered in Bellingham. A more complete listing of things to do in Bellingham can be found [here](#).

- [Museums in Bellingham](#)
- [Attractions in Bellingham](#)
- [Annual Events in Bellingham](#)
- [Theatre and Music in Bellingham](#)
- [Dining in Bellingham](#)



Courtesy of [Glen Echo Garden](#)

Obtaining a Driver's License

In the US, a driver's license or ID card is issued by each individual state and not by the federal government. Since there is no national identity card in the USA, and many Americans don't have a passport or carry around a birth certificate, a driver's license issued by your state is often the only official piece of identification for many citizens. Since 9/11, you will need to show a valid driver's license or State ID card to enter many big office buildings.

If you have an out-of-state or out-of-country license, you may use it for as long as you maintain your residency in the state where it was issued. If you are moving permanently to Washington, you may use your out-of-state license for only your first month here. To change to a Washington license, bring your Social Security card, another form of ID, and multiple utility or phone bills verifying that you are a Washington resident to a motor vehicle facility. You'll have to pass written and eye exams, and usually a road test.

For general information and instructions on how to obtain an official state ID card or driver's license, visit the [Washington Department of Motor Vehicles](#).

Your Destination Services Consultant will also assist you with the proper procedure.