Parking Permits
-Brandy Rinearson, City Clerk

Do I really have to move my car every four hours? Not if you have obtained a residential parking permit. The City Clerk’s office administers residential parking permits to residents of the City. The purpose of this permitting system is to facilitate parking on public streets near residential homes, allowing a resident to park within one block of their residence. A vehicle displaying a valid parking permit is permitted to park in a residential permit parking area for which the permit has been issued, without being limited by the posted time limit. To obtain a permit you will need the following:

- Proof of ownership of the residential vehicle
- Residential vehicle must be operable
- Proof that you reside in a residential area which is zoned residential R-4.5, R-8, R-12, or R-20

Residential parking permits are free and are renewable in five-year intervals. All current residential parking permits expire on December 31, 2015.

What if I am having overnight guests?
Guests are eligible for residential parking permits too. Their residential vehicle must be owned or leased by the guest, licensed, and operable. There is no charge for this permit and it is valid for up to 14 days.

For more information on residential parking permits please contact the Clerk’s office at (360) 876-4407.

Comprehensive Planning
-Department of Community Development

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA - RCW 36.70A), in an effort to control the rapid growth that was, and still is, occurring in the State. The legislature found “that uncoordinated and unplanned growth, together with a lack of common goals expressing the public's interest in the conservation and the wise use of our lands, pose a threat
to the environment, sustainable economic development, and the health, safety, and high quality of life enjoyed by residents of this state.” (RCW 36.70A.010).

As a result of this law, any county in the State with over 50,000 people, and that increased by 10 percent or more, must create a comprehensive plan. Any cities within qualifying counties must comply as well.

The Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) creates goals and policies on various elements that could affect the City’s future, including; land use, housing, parks, the environment, economic development, utilities, transportation, and capital facilities. These goals and policies shape the values and direction of the City.

Port Orchard’s most recent major update was in 2008. Community Development staff and graduate students from the University of Washington will be starting work in the upcoming months to get public input on a new update. They will be working closely with citizens, the Planning Commission, and City Council to create a new plan. Be on the lookout for meeting notifications. What’s discussed could shape the future of our City and your neighborhood.

The part of the Comp Plan that could most affect an individual is the Comprehensive Plan and zoning maps, which dictate what uses are allowed and prohibited on your property. If you’re not aware of your zoning, check out the current map at http://www.cityofportorchard.us/docs/planning/maps/.

**Can I change my zoning?**

The Planning Department frequently receives questions from landowners or developers about the allowed uses on their property. Sometimes, the way they would like to use their property is not an “allowed use” within the zoning classification that their property has. The options then presented are to either find a use that does fit within the current zoning, or make a request to have the zoning changed. Many people are surprised to find out that the process to change the zoning on a property requires almost a year to complete, and application does not guarantee approval. So what does this process entail?

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC), which governs local counties and cities, requires a “periodic update” of our Comprehensive Plan to be done every seven years. The City of Port Orchard is due for this update in 2015. The WAC also requires that each county or city provide for an ongoing review process which can happen once annually. This is only allowed once per year so that the cumulative effect of various proposals can be ascertained. The City of Port Orchard Municipal Code requires that applications for this annual review be submitted to the Department of Community Development by June 15th of each calendar year. **Why June 15th?**

An application to rezone a property may also require an amendment to the comprehensive plan. When these applications are submitted, the Department of Community Development begins researching the request. The first review by the Planning Commission is typically scheduled for August, with discussions and public hearings in September and October. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council. The Council reviews the amendments and holds a public hearing in November with a resulting decision in December.

**How are rezones reviewed?** The Port Orchard Municipal Code lists a set of seven criteria that a proposal must meet. These criteria include items such as: the suitability for the land to be developed under the proposed zoning, the affect of rezoning the property on surrounding landowners, the affect of rezoning the property on the community, and how the proposed rezone fits the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, among others. A proposal must meet all seven of these criteria to be considered in the annual amendment cycle.

To conclude, if you are looking to conduct an activity on your property which is not allowed under the current zoning, then you would want to apply for a rezone. For further information about applying for a rezone, please contact the Department of Community Development at (360) 874-5533.