

ADVANTAGES OF ANNEXATION

Your Annexation Committee firmly believes that annexation to Port Orchard is in our best interests and has put together the following FAQ to help you make an informed decision.

Q: What is the main advantage to annexing with the City of Port Orchard?

A: Greater voice in decisions affecting our community. Our area would have about 25% of the vote in future Port Orchard elections, compared to less than 2% in the county, today. Your neighbors could run and be elected to the Port Orchard City Council or Mayor.

Q: Will we get better police coverage and end paying for service from the Sheriff?

A: The Port Orchard Police Department would provide better service to our area than the present coverage by the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office. The officer to resident ratio is greater in Port Orchard than the county. Average response times would be significantly faster. Our area would become a designated patrol area for the Port Orchard police department which will end the hiring of off-duty sheriff deputies. Community Policing will be available to our area.

Q: Who will maintain our streets?

A: Port Orchard Department of Public Works will respond to snow removal, street sweeping, and road repair and water retention pond maintenance. Their garages and office is across from the Juvenile Courts on Old Clifton.

Q: Can the City of Port Orchard raise our taxes?

A: They could just like the County can, BUT we would have a greater voice in discussing any tax increases to area.

Q: Will we still have to pay the water and sewer surcharge of 50%?

A: The water and sewer surcharge, which averages about \$300.00 per year, would be removed.

Q: Could Port Orchard re-zone our area?

A: Any re-zoning, city or county would require a public hearing where the citizens, city or county, may voice their opinion on the issues at hand. It is not an easy task to re-zone if the majority of voters disagree.

Q: Will the permitting process be any faster?

A: The mayor of Port Orchard, Lary Coppola, has said publicly that one of his major goals is to speed up the permitting processes. Currently the City processes permits much faster than the County.

Q: Will annexing effect how the Growth Management Act (GMA) is implemented?

A: The increase in population alone gives the City of Port Orchard a greater voice in how the GMA is implemented within our community. The Growth Management Act recognizes cities and annexation as the best way to manage growth.

Q: Will annexation change the school boundaries?

A: School boundaries will remain the same.

Q: Would annexation have any effect on our current CC&R's?

A: No, annexation will have no effect on our CC&R's and Association Regulations.

Q: Would annexation make us change our addresses or zip codes?

A: No, our street names, addresses and zip codes will remain the same.

Q: What is the advantage to Port Orchard in annexing our area?

A: The increase in size gives Port Orchard a better chance to obtain State and Federal Grants. The size of the city relates directly to the response and attention they get from the State. Increased population raises the level of political influence and prestige. Increase in population will increase the valuation of the city resulting in greater bonding capacity.

Q: Why don't we incorporate our area into our own city?

A: Annexation eliminates the need to form a new city government and its related costs.

Q: Will annexation create new jobs?

A: Annexation may bring new businesses into the city creating new jobs as the population density moves more westward.

Q: Will annexation change my property value?

A: As more improvements and urban utilities are made available, real estate values and marketability may improve. Annexation often results in the lowering of fire insurance premiums. Annexation would not have a direct effect on one's property valuation; that would be up to the county Assessor's office, just as it is today.

Q: Should we annex who will be responsible for control of our parks and trails?

A: The park and trails within McCormick Woods are the property of the McCormick Woods Association and are maintained by the Association. The Ridge pays a yearly fee to help maintain the trails so they are free to use the trails, not the parks. If McCormick Woods is annexed the parks will remain the property of the Association.

Q: Has the topic of school impact fees been resolved?

A: Yes, the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Terri Patton has said it is not an issue as the City will have the Impact Fees needed for the schools upon annexation.

Q: If annexed to Port Orchard who would provide fire protection?

A: Fire district 7 besides covering our area also provides fire protection and Medic 7 for the City of Port Orchard; so nothing would change with annexation.

Q: Any other benefits of annexing to Port Orchard?

A: Twice a year the city has a clean-up campaign where they will pick up most any discards for free or for a minimal fee.

Q: You list a number of supposed advantages to annexation, but what if we do nothing; like stay the way we are?

A: Change is inevitable and we either control change or it will control us. The Growth Management (GMA) act fosters annexation of rural areas to cities as a way to control growth. If we "do nothing" and remain with the County, we could be hit with increasing taxes and eroding services. The counties tax base will decrease as other areas in the county do annex or incorporate in accordance with the GMA mandate. With less than 2% of the county vote, we would be powerless to resist these changes. Or, we could "do nothing" and still be annexed into the city of Bremerton, with or without our consent. State law permits annexation with a 60% vote by residents of the acquiring City. Your property taxes would increase by about \$700 (based on current rates), and the 50% surcharge on your water bill would not go away. What we do today will set the tone for years to come. It is best to control our future now, while we still have choices.