

Chapter 4. PARKS

4.1. Parks Element Context

Port Orchard has experienced a steady growth in population over the past 25 years. The population growth is largely attributable to Port Orchard's geographic proximity to the largest population and employment centers in the state. Port Orchard also has the third greatest population in Kitsap County. This increase in population has created a corresponding increase in parks & recreation demand in Port Orchard.

4.2. Parks Vision

Port Orchard is a community which provides a full range of parks, recreation, open space, and biodiversity by protecting native wildlife habitat, restoring and preserving natural systems, enjoying majestic marine and mountain views, and ensuring new development enhances the natural environment.

4.3. Parks Planning Area

For analysis purposes only, the City is divided into six quadrants. Community parks are usually destinations, and people will travel there by car or public transit for the purpose of using the large park. Examples of the community parks are Van Zee Park, the South Kitsap Park and the Veterans Memorial Park. However, the community parks do not serve any specific neighborhood. Therefore, planning quadrants are identified based on physical obstacles that limit foot traffic. For instance, Tremont Street is considered an obstacle due to the traffic volume it experiences. The six planning areas for the City are shown on Figure 4-1 and are as follows:

AREA	NORTH BOUNDARY	EAST BOUNDARY	SOUTH BOUNDARY	WEST BOUNDARY
1	SINCLAIR INLET	PORT ORCH. BVLD	TREMONT ST	SR 16
2	SINCLAIR INLET	BLACKJACK CREEK	TREMONT ST	PORT ORCH. BVLD
3	TREMONT ST	POTTERY AVE	SR 16	SR 16
4	TREMONT ST	SIDNEY AVE	SR 16	POTTERY AVE
5	SINCLAIR INLET	HORSTMAN RD	MILE HILL DRIVE	BLACKJACK CREEK
6	LUND AVE	BLACKJACK CREEK	SR 16	SIDNEY AVE

Table 4-1. Port Orchard Areas of Analysis for Parks Planning

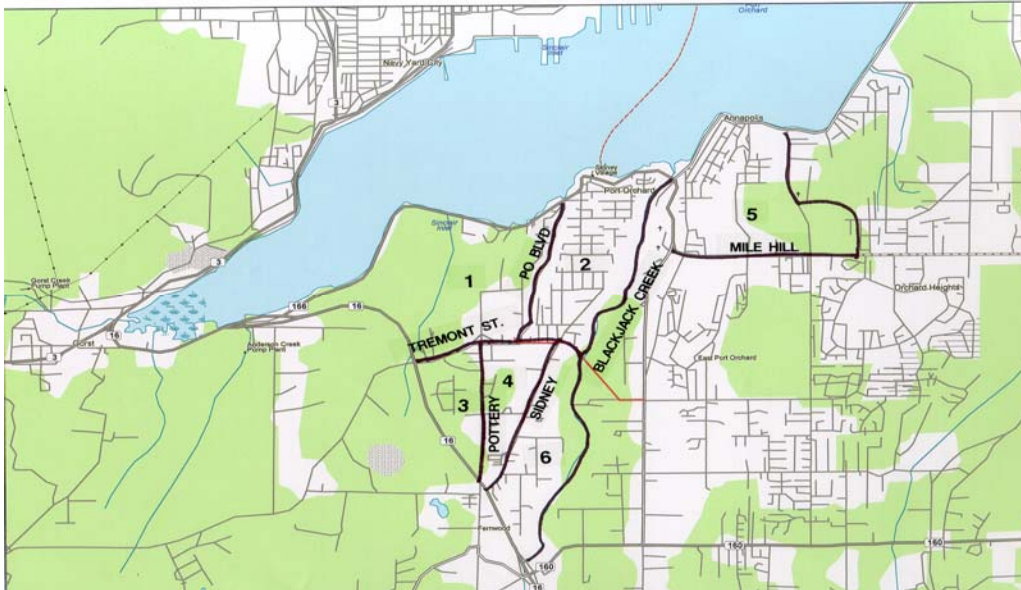


Figure 4-1. Port Orchard Areas of Analysis for Parks Planning

4.4. Public Involvement

The secret of a successful plan is to be realistic and to assure the plan will define accomplishments that satisfy public needs. Without public input and involvement, the demands of the citizens cannot be well established. Public opinion concerning recreation and facilities has been sought routinely over the years. Combined with historical data, the City will usually determine community opinions through public hearings and telephone surveys. In this manner, a clear picture of the recreational needs of the citizens of Port Orchard is determined.

In December 1975, one thousand surveys were mailed to the residents of Port Orchard in order to define their demands for parks and recreation. Of these thousand mailings, only two hundred or 20% of the surveys were returned. In March 1983, a telephone survey of the residents was accomplished. One hundred sixty residents were randomly selected from the telephone book. Of these 160, 78 people were contacted and participated.

In November 1982, the City, in conjunction with the Shorelines Division of the Department of Ecology, used Coastal Zone Management funds to study the urban waterfront. The study included a task force of local citizens and was able to be expanded to study the recreational needs of the urban waterfront. The task force participation was an average of 15 people representing organizations such as the Downtown Merchants Association, the real estate community, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the elderly, the sports community, and concerned citizens. Five task force meetings were held with the architectural/planning consultant, Kasprisin-Pettinari Design. Also one all day workshop was held in downtown Port Orchard in which 60 people visited to provide valuable ideas and public perceptions.

In August 1987, the City conducted a telephone survey of its residents. The survey was completed during normal working hours and the calls were focused on actual City residents. Ninety five people responded to the telephone questionnaire. In 1991, the City conducted a survey by sending out 200 survey forms to randomly selected households. Seventy-four questionnaires were returned which makes up a 37% return rate.

In 1996, a survey was mailed in the quarterly newsletter. Of the 2,000 mailed to the residents, 92 were returned. This was a 5% return rate. In 1998, approximately 2,500 surveys were mailed in the quarterly newsletter, which goes to every house and apartment in the City. Although the responding surveys would be eligible for a \$50 gift certificate, only 135 surveys were returned. This was a 5% return rate.

The survey conducted in 1991 was revised so results reflect different responses. A summary of public input from the waterfront revitalization study is included in the 2008 Port Orchard Comprehensive Parks Plan. Surveys were again mailed to city residents in 2006 and electronic surveys were collected from the citizens and local groups such as the MOM's club in 2008. The results of the 2008 electronic surveys are included in Appendix B.

4.5. Existing Recreational Areas and Facilities

The City of Port Orchard currently has a municipal parks system which provides certain recreational opportunities to the public. The existing system is supplemented by the schools of the South Kitsap School District, and the Kitsap County Parks and Recreation Department.

4.5.1 Van Zee Park:

Area: 8.4 Acres

Van Zee Park is an accomplishment of the 1976 Comprehensive Parks Plan. Since 1979, this park has been consistently improving and expanding through diligent application of a multi-year plan. With prudent expenditures of the now-defunct Federal Revenue Sharing funds and considerable volunteer effort and JTPA labor, the City completed the park in 1983. As a result, Van Zee Park has been transformed from a vacant field to a recreational facility containing picnic areas, trails, shelters, two baseball diamonds, a playground, a sports field, and a lighted double tennis court. Also provided in this park are a restroom and a horseshoe court. The top of the existing concrete water reservoir has been fenced to allow a safe place for children to ride bicycles and play basketball. The park is oriented towards the family and unorganized sports. During the last planning



period, the playground equipment was replaced. All facilities in Van Zee Park are free to the public.

4.5.2 Central Park:

Area: 1.4 Acres

Central Park is located in the residential area of Port Orchard and contains three picnic tables, a playground, sports field, restroom, and full basketball court. As with other City parks, there is a complete underground sprinkler system to minimize maintenance expenses. Renovation of the basketball court will be required in the near future. This park is primarily for families and young children. During the last planning period, a new restroom was constructed, and the playground was improved. All facilities in Central Park are free to the public.



4.5.3 Givens Field:

Area: 8.3 Acres

Givens Field is primarily an athletic facility for organized teams. Two baseball diamonds are on this site and are leased to South Kitsap Western Little League and the Babe Ruth League. The public, which is not affiliated with the various organized teams, does not use these athletic resources without specific approval from the lessee.



Givens Field also has facilities dedicated for general public use. These facilities include a lighted double tennis court, lighted horseshoe courts, restrooms, picnic area, and playground. On site is the Active Club which is a municipal building consisting of three different-sized meeting rooms, bathrooms, kitchen, storage areas, and daylight basement. Any activity or organization may schedule with the City Clerk's office the use of a meeting room and the facility. Except for the baseball diamonds, the facilities of Givens Park are free to the public.

4.5.4 Lundberg Park:

Area: 8.3 Acres

Lundberg Park was previously a five-acre RV campground for self-contained recreational vehicles. The property was developed in such a manner to minimize its impact on the forest and the surrounding area. The park had been closed to the public since 2001.

4.5.5 Paul Powers, JR., Park

Area: 2.5 Acres

The playfield adjacent to Fire Station #2 provides an area for the various soccer teams and T-ball teams to practice. The field is not regulation size for soccer, and there are no facilities for public use at this site. In the northeast corner of the field, there is a playground which was renovated in 1993. The play area consists of a big toy-type piece of equipment, swings and a basketball court.



4.5.6 Port Orchard Boat Ramp:

Port Orchard has one municipal boat ramp to allow public access to Sinclair Inlet. In the year 2000, the Port of Bremerton expanded the parking and constructed a public restroom. There are now 21 parking stalls for trucks with trailers and a boat assemble area to prepare for launching. The ramp consists of 155 feet of concrete floats and two concrete ramps. The hinges for the concrete floats were last replaced in 1997. There is no charge for use of this ramp. This facility is extremely popular for both commercial and the public for marine activities. The City is looking for outside funding opportunities to renovate this ramp in the near future.



4.5.7 DeKalb Street Pedestrian Pier:

To enhance public access to the water, the City has constructed the DeKalb Pedestrian Pier. The facility has limited parking and extends in the DeKalb Waterway. The first 169 feet of the structure is a timber pier with two picnic tables. In 1988 this structure had 161 feet of wood floats and a pedestrian ramp. Since 1988 this structure has been extended with an additional 367 feet of wood floats totaling 528 feet. The structure is used for sightseeing and fishing. During



the last planning period, the wood floats were replaced with new floats that are more “fish friendly.” There is no charge for the use of this structure.

4.5.8 Seattle Avenue Property

Two tax parcels were donated to the City by Mrs. Gerry Bruckart. These tax parcels, located at the corner of Division Street and Seattle Avenue, are undeveloped and extend into the wooded ravine of Blackjack Creek. There are no plans for the development of the lots at this time. However, the concept for the property is to construct a deck from street level into the wooded area. Due to the steep terrain, this deck would allow access to the wooded area of Blackjack Creek ravine without encroaching upon the water. It would be a shady park area that would be extremely popular in the summer months.

The property was deeded with the restriction that only a structure could be constructed on it for the purpose of public observation of the Blackjack ravine and its surrounding environs to enhance the appreciation of the environment. The structure would be dedicated to the Sprague-Howe family.

4.5.9 Westbay Lease Area

The City has previously leased the shorelands of Blackjack Creek to the Westbay Shopping Center. As the need for public access increases, the City is reconsidering this policy. This land provides a strip of property 45 feet by 300 feet along the east edge of Blackjack Creek where it enters Sinclair Inlet. The future use of this land could include an educational area for the protection of the salmon and a small waterfront park.



4.5.10 Neighborhood Pocket Parks

As new subdivisions are approved, the City will often require a pocket park to be included in the plat. These small parks are typically the size of a residential lot and can contain a big toy, swing, or other piece of playground equipment. Some parks are owned and maintained by Homeowners Associations. Others are City parks. City parks are in Windfall Place and Eagle Crest subdivisions.

4.6. Other Agency Facilities

SOUTH KITSAP SCHOOL DISTRICT #402

To complement the municipal facilities, there are two schools within the city limits. In the South part of the City, the Cedar Heights Junior High School is located. The Junior High has a gymnasium, sports field, track, football field, and baseball diamond. However, use of these resources is generally limited to students. The South Kitsap High School is in the eastern half of the city. The High School's facilities are modern and complete. These facilities consist of a gymnasium, sports field, track, football field, baseball diamond, soccer field, lighted tennis courts, and an Olympic size indoor swimming pool. The public has access to the tennis courts, track and swimming pool when not in use for school activities.



KITSAP COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT

At a site located in the Retsil neighborhood at the corner of Olney Avenue, Kitsap County has developed the Veteran's Memorial Park. Facilities within this park include a softball diamond, two soccer fields, and a playground. In 2008, the South Kitsap Parks and Recreation District was dissolved, and the transfer of its primary asset, the 200 acres known as South Kitsap Community Park at the corner of Jackson and Lund, was transferred to County ownership. This park has wooded trails, baseball fields, a play structure, a batting cage, and is home to the Kitsap Live Steamers, a club that operates a small train track in the park.

4.7. Action Program and Related Documents

The emphasis of the next twenty years for municipal parks is to maintain what currently exists while slowly expanding to meet future needs. Significant improvements caused by expanding population should be funded as land use actions allow higher population densities. To meet the needs of the community for parks, trails, recreation and open space, maintenance of existing facilities and creation of new facilities would be funded by annual budget expenditures, grants, impact fees and other financial means available to the City. The Port Orchard Comprehensive Parks Plan is the planning document that develops the City to budget its resources to allow it to meet the goals and objectives for municipal parks.

Although the emphasis is to maintain the existing park system, the number of parks and trails will need to increase to meet the demands of the new population. In the next 20 years, the City will need a minimum of 5 acres for new parks, recreation and open space opportunities. Trails and provision of walking/bicycle recreation paths along major residential streets and a safe waterfront walking area along Sinclair Inlet as part of the Mosquito Fleet Trail are goals for the city within the 20 year planning horizon. The City also plans, as funds become available, to form partnerships and obtain easements to construct a trail along Blackjack Creek. Parks and trails maps are referenced in Appendix A.

4.8. Goals and Objectives

The City of Port Orchard has maintained a consistent set of goals and objectives in its endeavor to provide recreational opportunities to the community. In order for the park system to complement the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, the current goals and objectives of the Parks and Open Space Element are adopted. The Port Orchard Comprehensive Parks Plan is the adopted document that further identifies the short term application and details the analysis for the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The overall goal of the Parks and Open Space element is as follows:

To develop and maintain adequate and convenient Parks, Recreation, and Open Space areas and facilities for all age groups and to better serve both the existing and future population of Port Orchard and surrounding areas. This goal can be achieved by several objectives.

Objective 1: Increase public access to the marine shoreline by using municipal authority to encourage better public access to the shoreline.

Objective 2: Preserve open space considered cultural and scenic in value by:

- a. enhancing and expanding park facilities
- b. discouraging obstructions of scenic views

Objective 3: Increase the size and number of parks and open spaces by:

- a. establishing partnerships with other agencies to jointly utilize public facilities
- b. promoting through public and private investments, the acquisition of open space facilities and assuring proper maintenance thereof
- c. providing for public input when developing plans for public parks
- d. providing for a mixture of active and passive open spaces within residential and commercial areas with consideration of nearby public facilities
- e. providing input when others develop plans for public parks within Port Orchard's Urban Growth Boundary

The comprehensive goals and objectives, which are restated for reference, are consistent with those of the adopted Comprehensive Parks Plan,

Open Space, Recreation and Resource Protection

Goal I. Establish a coordinated and connected system of open space throughout the City that:

- Preserves natural systems.
- Protects wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Provides land for recreation.
- Increases opportunities for physical activity.
- Preserves natural landforms and scenic areas.



Policy POP-1 Preserve and enhance the natural and aesthetic qualities of shoreline areas while allowing reasonable development to meet the needs of residents.

Policy POP-2 Promote visual and public access to shorelines where it is not in conflict with preserving environmentally sensitive areas or protecting significant wildlife habitat.

Policy POP-3 Distribute parks and open spaces throughout the City, but particularly focus new facilities in areas of the City facing the greatest population growth, in areas where facilities are deficient, and/or in areas where connections of the open space network could be made.

Policy POP-4 Work with adjacent jurisdictions and state, federal, and tribal governments to identify and protect open space networks to be preserved within and around Port Orchard.

Policy POP-5 Preserve environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., Blackjack Creek) to delineate neighborhood boundaries and create open space corridors.

Policy POP-6 As new parcels along the Sinclair Inlet are incorporated within the City, additional access to the shoreline should be explored, consistent with the Mosquito Fleet Plan and the shoreline section of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal 2. Encourage the development and maintenance of open space and recreational facilities, where possible, in the established areas of the City.

- Policy POP-7 Preserve sufficient open space to serve the existing and future population of the City, including the pass through as well as the permanent population
- Policy POP-8 Develop the passive recreational and educational potential of Blackjack Creek watershed, the shoreline, and adjacent areas in balance with residential, commercial, and other uses.
- Policy POP-9 Shape and seek the right balance for urban development through the use of open space, thereby strengthening the beauty, identity, and aesthetic qualities of the City and surrounding areas.
- Policy POP-10 Develop shoreline parks, including walking and biking trails, which would link the shopping center to the shoreline. Proposed walking and biking trails would also be designed to serve residential areas.
- Policy POP-11 Encourage safe parks and recreational equipment by maintaining existing facilities.
- Policy POP-12 Develop covered play structures whenever feasible to encourage use of parks and facilities in inclement weather.

As South Kitsap County and Port Orchard continue to grow, the importance of the limited recreational resources continues to increase. Greater population pressures demand well-defined goals and priorities. In order to achieve these comprehensive goals and objectives, the concise and realistic objectives must be specified:

Goal 3. To provide open space or natural landscaping throughout the City limits

- Policy POP-13 Zoning ordinances shall identify and preserve open space areas.
- Policy POP-14 Landscaping, such as trees and shrubbery, should be included in the commercial areas of the City.
- Policy POP-15 Vacant municipal land not required for municipal services shall be maintained to provide a pleasing natural condition.

Goal 4. Neighborhood parks and recreational facilities should be conveniently located throughout the City.

- Policy POP-16 The Active Club should continue to be maintained and improved.

- Policy POP-17 A performing arts center should be encouraged.
- Policy POP-18 All facilities should accommodate the handicapped and the elderly and meet the federal American Disabilities Act.
- Policy POP-19 Maximize the use of State and Federal grants for future improvements whenever possible.
- Policy POP-20 Coordinate with other governmental entities and civic organizations to provide new facilities to the public.
- Policy POP-21 Encourage commercial enterprises to establish facilities which are harmonious with the community vision and goals.

Goal 5. Athletic endeavors and organized sports should be encouraged throughout the community.

- Policy POP-22 Athletic fields should be supplemented with picnic and playground facilities to encourage family participation.
- Policy POP-23 Any vacant public land large enough for an athletic field should be used for this purpose, when feasible.
- Policy POP-24 Private sports programs should be encouraged.
- Policy POP-25 A trail system should be established along the shoreline.
- Policy POP-26 Coordinate with sports councils and committees when possible.
- Policy POP-27 Support the development of a skate park in the South Kitsap area.

Goal 6. The waterfront should be preserved and protected to enhance public use.

- Policy POP-28 Boat docks and marinas should be encouraged; however, these activities are not to be construed as the sole resource of the waterfront.
- Policy POP-29 Public access to the water is required and should be provided for new municipal and commercial development.
- Policy POP-30 Viewing decks and similar pedestrian-oriented structures are needed and should be constructed in the urban waterfront area.
- Policy POP-31 A waterfront bicycle and walking path should be constructed.
- Policy POP-32 Beach access should be identified and developed. This should be integrated with waterfront trail system.

Goal 7. Ensure maximum access to the marine shoreline.

Policy POP-33 Public access should be considered as a condition of a Shoreline Development Permit (SDP).

Policy POP-34 Joint public access on adjacent property should be encouraged.

Goal 8. Provide for a mixture of active and passive open space within residential and commercial developments and preserve open space considered cultural and scenic in value.

Policy POP-35 Buffers and open space should be a required design element in new developments.

Policy POP-36 Steep slopes and sensitive areas should be protected with critical area restrictions.

Goal 9. To promote the acquisition and maintenance of open space through public and private investment.

Policy POP-37 Countywide open space acquisition should be encouraged.

Policy POP-38 Maintenance of City-owned open space should take precedence over acquisition of new City parks, unless the proposed park serves a specific need.

Goal 10. Enhance and expand existing park facilities.

Policy POP-39 Improvements in parks should be done annually.

Goal 11. Preserve and enhance environmentally sensitive open space.

Policy POP-40 Identify environmentally sensitive open space.

Policy POP-41 Protect environmentally sensitive open space by limiting public intrusion.

Policy POP-42 Preserve sensitive areas by implementing legal instruments to dedicate them for this purpose.

Goal 12. Place and construct community entry monuments on arterial city entrances.

Policy POP-43 Maintain and landscape existing Gateway areas.

Policy POP-44 Prepare Gateway designs and seek public/private funding.

Policy POP-45 Set-up and preserve historical monuments at key points within the City.

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