CHAPTER 2. PARK PLANNING SERVICE AREA

2.1 Community Profile

Port Orchard is the southernmost city within Kitsap County, and is designated as the Kitsap County seat. The municipal limits include approximately 11,144 citizens with an urban growth area population of 17,857, all contained within in a larger South Kitsap community of nearly 60,000 people. As seen on Map 1, the City of Port Orchard is centrally located in Puget Sound, adjacent to active waterways and provides an enviable location for recreation, tourism, and economic growth.

Port Orchard is conveniently located near the major urban and suburban areas of Puget Sound and Seattle that are only 60 minutes away by ferry. Tacoma and population centers to the south are connected by a 30-minute automobile drive along a four-lane freeway. Since the second Tacoma Narrows Bridge was completed, the access to the Tacoma metropolitan area and major I-5 corridor has improved substantially. Port Orchard, also benefits from being centrally located between the population centers of Bremerton, Seattle, and Tacoma. (See Map 1)

The community is primarily residential in nature, serving as both a suburb of Seattle and
Tacoma, and providing a home for many residents who work at the naval installations at Bremerton. Although a great majority of citizens work in other cities or areas, the opportunities for local recreation are seen as a benefit to being located within the City, as well as benefitting the larger South Kitsap region.

2.2 Physical Features and Land Use

Port Orchard is a city in and the county seat of Kitsap County, Washington, United States. It is located 13 miles due west of Seattle and connected to Seattle via the Washington State Ferries run to Bremerton and Southworth.

Port Orchard is located on the shorelines of Sinclair Inlet, adjacent to Port Orchard Bay, a water body separating the cities of Port Orchard and Bremerton from Bainbridge Island. Port Orchard is a community that is blessed with forested hillsides, sloping to the marine waterfront of Sinclair Inlet and is provided with scenic views of the Olympic Mountains and an ideal proximity to Puget Sound for recreation opportunities.

The natural setting of this historic maritime city of the Kitsap peninsula is accentuated with historic downtown buildings and green spaces that combine with the Olympic mountains and marine vistas to create a dramatic backdrop for an attractive and memorable place. By ferry, automobile, or boat, the city is the gateway to the both the Kitsap peninsula and Olympic peninsula's natural wonders. With the exception of several shoreline steep slopes, the topography is not severe and is such that from many locations within the City the views of the Puget Sound, the shipyards and Seattle are widely available and purposely maintained.

In addition to marine activities, the City's land forms include streams, ravines and wetlands. This unique and diverse biology and land forms provide both
opportunities to protect and enhance the environment and opportunities to provide natural places where parks and open spaces exist and can be located.

### 2.3 Historic Character

The Port Orchard has a semi-rural, small town character with the area first settled in 1854 by William Renton and Daniel Howard, who set up a saw mill there. The town that was to become Port Orchard was originally platted in 1886 by Frederick Stevens, who named the new location after his father, Sidney. The town of Sidney was incorporated September 15, 1890, and was the first in Kitsap County to be both platted and incorporated. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Navy sought a suitable location for another installation on the west coast, and found it with the assistance of Sidney’s residents in Orchard Bay (this installation would later become the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard).

The county seat was originally in Port Madison, but moved after a popular vote to Sidney in 1892. In December of that same year, the residents of Sidney petitioned both the state legislature and the Post Office Department to rename the city to "Port Orchard." The legislature refused, as Charleston (now West Bremerton) had also requested that name. The Post Office Department, however, went through with the name change, and as a result the Port Orchard post office ended up in Sidney, and the Charleston post office ended up in Port Orchard. It wasn't until 1903 that local politician Will Thompson convinced the state legislature to correct this confusing situation, and relocated the Charleston post office to Charleston, at the same time renaming Sidney to "Port Orchard," as we know it today.

### 2.4 Economics & Demographics

The demographics provided by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the US 2010 Census indicate that there were 11,144 people, 2,901 households, and 1,772 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,912.1 people per square mile (738.9/km²). There were 3,178 housing units at an average density of 789.9 per square mile (305.2/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 82.22% White, 4.00% African American, 1.49% Native American, 3.69% Asian, 1.05% Pacific Islander, 1.38% from other races, and 6.16% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 5.13% of the population.

Of the 2,901 households, 34.5% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 40.5% were married couples living together, 16.0% had a female householder with no husband present, and 38.9% were non-families. 30.6% of all households were made up of individuals, and 11.0% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.40 and the average family size was 2.99.
In the city the population was spread out with 25.6% under the age of 18, 13.2% from 18 to 24, 33.3% from 25 to 44, 16.6% from 45 to 64, and 11.3% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 31 years. For every 100 females there were 105.8 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 105.1 males.

The median income for a household in the City was $34,020, and the median income for a family was $41,946. Males had a median income of $33,610 versus $25,739 for females. The per capita income for the city was $16,382. About 10.9% of families and 12.9% of the population were below the poverty line, including 17.2% of those under age 18 and 9.1% of those age 65 or over.

2.5 Park & Recreation Service Area

City parks are created with intent of usage by all citizens within the City. The expectation of an effective park system is that it will be utilized by not only the residents of Port Orchard proper, but will also be utilized by a greater demographic including all South Kitsap residents. The Parks and Recreation planning and service area for the purposes of this document is limited to the current municipal boundaries. It is anticipated that as future annexations and expansions of the City limits occur, that subsequent updates of this document will be revised to include those areas.

The Port Orchard service area has been divided into seven service areas as shown on Map 2. A primary goal of the park system is to ultimately provide a city-owned park in each service area. (Please refer to Appendix A)