PORT ORCHARD CITY PARKS PLAN

CHAPTER 7. TRAILS & PATHS

7.1. Summary of Trails & Paths

Historically, the City of Port Orchard has had a very limited system of trails. Hiking, walking and cycling trails are in strong demand by residents of Port Orchard and have been identified as the highest priority in the survey results. Within the City of Port Orchard trails may exist within publicly acquired open space corridors or along rights-of-way or utility corridors defined by drainage areas, topographical changes, wooded areas or vegetation patterns. They can link schools, libraries or commercial areas with the City’s and other parks. The trails are encouraged to be sufficiently wide enough to accommodate the intended type of trail user(s), preserve the features through which the trail is traveling and at the same time, buffer adjacent land use activities.

Trails have been and are encouraged to be developed in conjunction with various recreational activities, such as jogging, nature study and historic observation. They may be a separate facility, such as a fitness trail, or a connected element of a larger facility, such as a greenway trail. Surfaces will vary with location and use. Provisions for parking, consistent signage and interpretive markers may also be included in trail development. In order to provide an appealing, safe, accessible, economical and diverse trail system, trail standards and classifications should be developed and may be based on the following:

Regional Trail. Regional trails include paved, shared-use, long-distance linear trail corridors for the exclusive use of pedestrians, bicycles and other approved trail users. Regional trails are typically 12’-14’ wide with a 2’ wide gravel shoulder on both sides. An
example of a regional trail would be proposed installation of the Bay Street Pedestrian Path / Mosquito Fleet Trail along the Sinclair inlet waterfront.

**Recreation Trail.** Recreation trails usually are paved, shared-use trails typically found within community parks or linking park facilities. Community trails are typically 8’-10’ wide. The public paths within McCormick North Ridge and the McCormick Village Park area are examples of community trails.

**Wilderness Trail.** Earthen or soft-surface trails with limited horizontal clearances and challenging grades and obstacles are typical for this type of trail. Providing limited accessibility within natural areas and pathways for regular facility maintenance are issues typical of this type of trail. Wilderness trails widely vary in width and surfacing. The trails within the Ross Creek area and the Blackjack Creek Wilderness Trail would be an example of a wilderness trail.

**Water Trail.** Water trails are navigable non-motorized and motorized waterways appropriate for canoe, kayak, and other boating. Port Orchard Sinclair Inlet waterfront falls within the mid-sound section of Washington State’s Cascadia Marine Trail, which is one of the premier water trails for non-motorized boaters in the United States. It extends the length and width of Puget Sound from the state capitol in Olympia to the Canadian border. This inland sea trail is a National Recreation Trail and designated one of only 16 National Millennium Trails in the United States. Providing launch facilities and non-motorized boat access points are important considerations in water trails.

**Bike Routes and Sidewalks.** Typically associated with the transportation system, these linear paths are heavily used within the Port Orchard municipal area and are often included in trail planning efforts. The extent of these facilities are fully defined, identified, and inventoried within the Port Orchard Transportation Plan.
7.2. Trails & Paths Vision

“To strive to increase access to recreation opportunities and provide non-motorized options”

The City’s vision for trails and paths is to ensure that the citizens of Port Orchard are provided access to significant environmental, historical and aesthetic points of view. While all trails cannot provide easy access to all points, trails are encouraged to be constructed and located so that the largest number of residents can utilize the facilities, including ADA accessible design whenever practicable.

7.3 Regional Trail Connections

Trail uses of walking for pleasure or exercise, bicycling and hiking, or jogging are the forms of recreation most commonly practiced by both City and County residents. The vision expressed in documents and trail planning processes is for a county-wide trail network connecting residential communities to parks, open spaces, schools, places of business and community facilities. In implementing that vision, many trail corridors extend through both rural and urban corridors and incorporate multiple jurisdictions. Inter-linkages for these trail connections are essential to maintain a regional continuity and to allow the most efficient use of combined resources between jurisdictions.

7.3.1 Mosquito Fleet Regional Trail

One of the greatest needs in Kitsap County is for safe and accessible non-motorized trails, which would link communities to places of work, study, and leisure. Kitsap County has developed a vision for the development of the Mosquito Fleet Regional Trail that accomplishes these goals and coincides with the goals and visions of the city of Port Orchard.

The mosquito fleet trail has been envisioned as a trail corridor for use by bicyclists and pedestrians that skirts the eastern shoreline of Kitsap County, connecting historic Mosquito Fleet docks along the way. It is a route for usage by commuters, school children, bicycle touring groups, recreation users, and tourists. It links cultural resources and
The City of Port Orchard Parks Plan includes the development of the multi-purpose path/trail beginning at Waterfront Park near the Downtown Port Orchard ferry facility and ending at the Annapolis ferry facility. The completed multi-purpose trail is intended to be a part of the Mosquito Fleet Trail.

This portion of the Mosquito Fleet Trail along Bay Street will be a significant segment of the off-road link in the Mosquito Fleet Trail, which eventually will connect Kingston to Southworth along the eastern shore of Kitsap County. It will also provide a much needed recreational facility within downtown Port Orchard, and a safe alternative transportation mode for its citizens and workforce.
7.3.2 Kitsap County Greenways Plan

In addition to the county goals for establishment of the Mosquito Fleet Trail, Kitsap County’s Greenways Plan envisions a comprehensive trail plan throughout south Kitsap. Some of the trail system will utilize existing road shoulders but the preferred system of trails will be new multi-use trails that provide scenic access throughout the county. Important connections within South Kitsap will include access to South Kitsap Regional Park and the Coulter Creek Heritage Park.

7.4. Trails & Paths Goals and Policies

GOAL 7.4.1: Develop existing and proposed trails within the city to provide recreational opportunities and non motorized options.

POLICIES:

1. Pursue development and implementation of park impact fees on new residential development in concert with the City’s Finance and Community Development Departments, and the City Attorney.

2. Pursue alternative financing of acquisition and development of park and open space land through private donation, partnerships, state and federal grant sources, dedicated local taxes and local levies.
GOAL 7.4.2:  Create a system of trails that provide interesting and diverse hiking opportunities as a refuge from the urban environment.

POLICIES:

1. Upon creation of a Parks Department, create a Parks Commission whose primary focus is determining the needs of the community and once determined, develop meaningful ways of implementation of an effective trail system.

2. Coordinate with City departments, Kitsap County and other agencies to explore use of existing public land for passive recreation, trail corridors and water access points.

GOAL 7.4.3:  Encourage construction of trails within the city through public/private partnership.

POLICY:

1. Include provisions for new development to contribute to additional trails including easement dedications and construction of trail sections when appropriate.