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Preliminary Draft
For discussion purposes only

Orcas Village Plan

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Orcas Village Plan

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INTRODUCTION

This document includes the official San Juan County plan for Orcas Village together with background important to understanding the plan's goals, policies, standards and land use map. These materials include the community's definition of issues and problems that the plan is intended to address.

Meetings were always open to everyone. The time, date and place of meetings were posted in the Orcas Post Office.

The Orcas Village Plan, as adopted in 2007, contains the goals and policies guiding the development of the village. Development regulations to implement these goals and policies are adopted in a separate, companion document and are incorporated into the San Juan County Code.

The Orcas Village Plan was developed over a ten year period beginning with a community meeting in 1997 when the County was conducting a major update of its comprehensive plan. Local community members were concerned about the issues arising from population growth, and wanted to establish specific guidelines in Orcas Village to protect the character of the community. The community committee established at this meeting worked with San Juan County to develop the plan.

History and Mission of the Orcas Village Steering Committee

The committee's mission included the following:

1. Conduct a study of Orcas Village: gather history, natural resource information, topographic data, and survey residents and business owners about priorities for the future of the village.
2. Make recommendations to the County to preserve the unique historic character of the village. Address village boundaries, land uses allowed, building scale, screening, and architectural design.
3. Conduct a traffic study of auto, pedestrian, bicycle, ferry, parking, and traffic safety issues, as they exist today, in the near future, and at buildout.
4. Encourage and implement preservation and conservation of resources.
5. Support diversity of locally-owned and home-based businesses.

1. Planning Background

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process that resulted in the Orcas Village Plan included seven major milestones. First, a series of community meetings held by the San Juan County Planning Department in 1998 resulted in alternatives that are summarized in *Orcas Village Activity Center Plan – Preliminary Alternatives*¹. Alternatives for land uses within Orcas Village and key issues of community concern were presented in that report for community review.

Second, consultants were hired by the community to develop a recommended plan. The consultants' work involved additional research and analysis of the physical environment and cultural landscape of the village. This resulted in the draft plan published in 1999 as the *Orcas Village & Ferry Landing Activity Center Plan, Orcas Village Steering Committee Final Report – November, 1999*:

The third step was the modification of boundaries and densities for Orcas Village in the October, 2000 amendments to the County Comprehensive Plan. This update included changes to the boundaries and residential densities permitted in Orcas Village generally consistent with the committee's recommendations².

The fourth milestone was the completion of the Orcas Village Traffic Study in February, 2002. Conducting a study of traffic conflicts and resolving the question of the need for a bypass was an important recommendation of the 1999 draft plan.

The fifth milestone was the development of a proposed village plan, incorporating all these prior efforts. The results of each of these steps are briefly outlined below.

¹ San Juan County Planning Department, *Orcas Village Activity Center Plan – Preliminary Alternatives*, June, 1999.

² This change was also to comply with state law (RCW 36.70A.070 (5)(d)).

1998-99 VILLAGE PLANNING EFFORT

Amanda Azous and Peter Fisher worked with the Orcas Village Steering Committee to develop planning recommendations based in part on the alternatives that were the outcome of the 1998 community meetings conducted by the County. Newly gathered data was integrated with information already compiled by the County. Significant environmental issues that were identified included (1) the physical limitations imposed by the village location, (2) the location of the watersheds of existing wells with respect to village boundaries and current density designations, (3) existing water availability and future demand, and (4) the location of the village in relationship to highly valued shoreline resources.

The consultants also surveyed property owners within the village and documented comments, concerns and suggestions in community meetings with members of the Orcas Village Steering Committee. A well-attended (57 people) public meeting was held to allow people to review and comment on the final proposals and recommendations.

The 1998-1999 planning process identified issues of significant concern about the cultural landscape of Orcas Village. These were:

- the preservation of the visual character of Orcas Village with particular attention to the scale and placement of future development within the village, the lack of existing road access to much of the northern village,
- the potential need for an alternative route through the village to mitigate traffic congestion, particularly if future development generates significant additional traffic,
- the strong desire to protect and respect places held as special to village residents and Orcas islanders,

- a strongly expressed desire to exclude many land uses outright while also significantly limiting the scale and impact of those uses allowed within the village, and
- a widespread attitude that Orcas Village is called a village but it is primarily a hamlet adjacent to a ferry landing.

There was strong community agreement that the village has a significant visual and social role as a gateway to Orcas Island, and that it is important to protect that character while serving the needs of islanders and the ferry system.

As a result of the information gathered, the following recommendations were made, outlined in detail in the report the *Orcas Village & Ferry Landing Activity Center Plan, Orcas Village Steering Committee Final Report – November, 1999*:

- Revise the village boundaries to exclude the northern parcels that are five acres or larger in area and reduce density on those excluded parcels in Orcas Village from one unit per half acre to one unit per five acres. This will better protect the watershed, particularly existing wells belonging to water systems serving Orcas Village, as well as reduce potential impacts to the village’s scenic character. These changes are also appropriate to bring the boundary into better conformance with Growth Management Act limitations on limited areas of more intensive rural development.
- Limit the size of the commercial area in order to maintain the small scale and mix of residential and commercial uses that characterize Orcas Village.
- Create a mixed commercial use area surrounding the commercial area that allows uses that meet the standard of low impact (defined by Table 8.2 of UDC revised for Orcas Village Activity Center). Low impact is defined as a level of impact that would be equivalent to a single-family residence. This mixed-use area would serve as a buffer to the residential areas while providing economic opportunities to people with businesses that are very small in scale and impact.³

³ The mixed-use area was later merged with the commercial district and the purposes of the two were combined.

- Discourage uses that will generate significant new traffic or increase parking needs within the village.
- Perform a transportation study to assess the need for new roads based on the final Orcas Village Plan, expected ferry traffic and parking needs.
- Develop architectural standards for new construction to maintain village character.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The October, 2000 Comprehensive Plan amendments included three measures significant to Orcas Village. First, the boundaries of the village were modified to eliminate parcels five acres and larger on the north side of the village. Second, the permitted residential density within the village was reduced to one unit per two acres to reflect the existing pattern of development. Third, allowable residential densities in the rural areas surrounding the village were reduced to a maximum of one unit per five acres, placing a lower cap on the ultimate local traffic volume that might use local roadways.

These changes were made both in response to the committee’s findings and to bring all activity center boundaries in the County into better conformance with the requirements of the state’s Growth Management Act (GMA). Under GMA, Orcas Village is a “limited area of more intensive rural development” (LAMIRD) as defined in RCW 36.70A.070 (5)(d).

The sixth milestone was unmarked by action but was an important product of continuing County planning efforts to address the near-term concerns of area residents and business owners for additional interim controls while the Orcas Village Plan was still in the process of final development for adoption. The community and the County worked together in 2004 to develop area-specific interim regulations but they ultimately were not adopted and work continued on refinement of the plan for adoption between 2005 and 2007. Progress was slowed by persistent limitations on County resources during this period but produced the seventh milestone: this Orcas Village Plan.

ORCAS VILLAGE TRAFFIC STUDY

In 2001, the County Planning and Public Works Departments contracted with a consultant to

perform the traffic analysis called for in the committee's report.

This report recommended minimum-impact improvements to reduce pedestrian-vehicular conflicts, and a long-term solution in which offloading ferry traffic would proceed up the ramp through the current ferry holding area to access Orcas Road and the rest of Orcas Island. While the technical obstacles to this solution are potentially significant, and the improvements needed could be expensive, the plan could substantially reduce traffic conflicts and make the commercial core of the village a much more safe and pleasant area for pedestrians and local residents. The recommendations from that report are included in the circulation component of the Village Plan in Chapter 3 of this document for reference. In time, the Washington State Ferries and the County may revisit the conclusions of this study as other system-wide ferry service issues arise

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2000 and release of the steering committee

report and the traffic study, additional meetings were held by the steering committee in 2001 and 2002 to fine-tune its recommendations. During this time, the land use regulatory concept outlined in the 1999 report was revised to be consistent with the County's standard procedures for land use permits. In order to maintain this consistency while meeting the objectives of the steering committee plan, the list of acceptable land uses in both commercial and residential areas was shortened, and specific sizes of facilities were included in the land use table to ensure that uses with impacts substantially greater than those of a single-family home would not be permitted until the circulation system and other systems were changed to prevent conflicts. Certain features of recommended design standards were included in the plan, while others remain for future consideration if needed.

The planning process was halting between 2003 and 2006 but the work conducted prior to that time substantially informed concluding public discussion and the final adoption process in 2007.

2. Issues, Problems and Opportunities

This section provides a summary of the issues that arose in the community during the development of the plan, together with the technical background necessary for addressing these issues in the plan.

2.1. SUMMARY

The following are issues that were identified in community meetings as important to development of the plan. Each of these issues is discussed in greater detail in the text that follows. This section provides the justification for many of the choices reflected in the Village Plan and regulations.

1. Ferry facilities and ferry traffic dominate the Village visually and functionally. Traffic conflicts make walking in the Village core during ferry unloading hazardous and unpleasant.
2. The steep topography and rocky terrain of the village are significant constraints on the design of roadways, walking paths, parking and land uses in the area of the ferry landing.
3. Existing businesses in Orcas Village have very little parking. Many would not meet parking requirements for their use in the County's current code. Roadways are not wide enough for on-street parking.
4. The commercial area of Orcas Village is along the main route of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists exiting ferries.
5. Because most tourist facilities on Orcas Island are located a substantial distance from the ferry landing, and there is no alternative transportation (neither a passenger ferry to central location nor public transportation on the island is available), nearly all visitors have no choice but to bring their cars.
6. A substantial number of bicycles on the road in summer reduce roadway capacity for motor vehicles and are hazardous because of narrow shoulders and short sight distances on curves near Orcas Village.
7. Because of the dominance of tourist patronage in Orcas Village, residents take second place in use of public areas and in retail goods and services provided in the Village.
8. The space in the core of Orcas Village is totally occupied by visitor-serving and ferry facilities. There is no space for a purely local public place for residents. The public rooms of the Orcas Hotel, the Post Office and Village Market provide the principal places to meet and socialize with neighbors.
9. The sustainable yield of groundwater is limited throughout the Orcas Village area, and obtaining additional water rights for community water systems from the Department of Ecology may take many years under current conditions.
10. Stormwater runoff from parking areas and roadways causes noticeable pollution of surface water by grease and oil.
11. The roadbed for Killebrew Lake Road just east of the ferry landing was constructed on fill which is now eroding.
12. The number of tourists and residents varies substantially between winter and summer, with high peaks on summer weekends and holidays. Parking, traffic and ferry holding facilities while providing flexible response to overflow conditions, are stressed in high traffic periods.
13. Because Orcas Village is an important entrance point to Orcas Island and to San Juan County, the visual character, the scale of structures, the natural landscape features, and the views from the water and from public places toward the water, are important components to the natural and built environments of the Village.

2.2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Much of the background information in this section was compiled in the steering committee draft plan, *Orcas Village & Ferry Landing Activity Center Plan*, November, 1999. This information was augmented by the 2000 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Urban Growth Areas and Rural Activity Centers. (See C for information on water and sewer services in Orcas Village.)

2.2.1. Geology, Groundwater Resources and Soils

Geology. Orcas Village is situated on rocky shoreline adjacent to Harney Channel. Dominant slopes in the village range from 8% to 15%; however, slopes in some portions of the village to the southeast are as steep as 15% to 30%. The majority of the village is located on Pre-Quaternary (older than about 1.8 million years) bedrock overlain with shallow soils, although some areas have deeper deposits of glacial drift (rock material carried by glacier ice, deposited at the point of melting or carried and deposited by melting glaciers). The shoreline east of the ferry landing is eroding glacial drift. There is also an area of glacial drift to the east that underlies most of the parcels within the Bayhead subdivision as well as properties located farther northwest.

A zone of probable bedrock fracturing exists just west of the Bayhead subdivision⁴. In such zones, there is greater potential for bedrock to contain accessible groundwater with regular recharge, and a number of wells are found in this area.

Groundwater. Drinking water is supplied by individual wells or by wells serving six privately-owned and operated community water systems. The largest of these systems, Orcas Landing, Inc., is approved for 22 connections and is currently at capacity. The Orcas Hotel is the largest water user by volume. Seventeen of the memberships are for residential use only. Information available to date indicates that all existing systems are near capacity, but there is potential for coordination among systems to augment both water sources and storage capacity.

⁴ Whitman, K. J. D. Molenaar, G. C. Bortleson and J. M. Jacoby. *Occurrence, Quality and Use of Groundwater in Orcas, San Juan, Lopez and Shaw Islands, San Juan County, Washington*, 1983.

Actual water availability is difficult to quantify in bedrock conditions like those near Orcas Village. As is the case in many areas of the county, there are more water rights allocated than the probable sustainable yield available, although many of the allocated rights exist only on paper, and have not been legally established through beneficial use. The water issues related to the feasibility of future development in Orcas Village are complex and need further investigation. A countywide study of potential water supply from surface and groundwater sources is currently underway by County's Health and Community Services Department.

Both actual sustainable yield and ability to obtain water rights are probable constraints on future development, but may not be a significant long-term limit within the relatively low densities permitted by the current County Comprehensive Plan. Currently, water supply is managed by requiring proof of water availability for new development and new land divisions.

Surface Water, Watersheds. Two watersheds affect Orcas Village. The largest extends from Mt. Woolard to Bayhead and includes the region of glacial drift within the eastern village. The remainder of the village drains directly to Harney Channel in sheet flow or very small watercourses. Wells within this area are fed by bedrock deposits that are likely to be recharged from the watershed to the east, in addition to fractures in the bedrock of Orcas Hill. These watersheds are predominately covered by forest, with most of the remainder in pasture.

Orcas Village has a mix of thick coniferous forest interspersed with more open stands of madrone, alder and Douglas maple, steep, mossy rock balds, grass and wildflower meadows, rooftops and pavement.

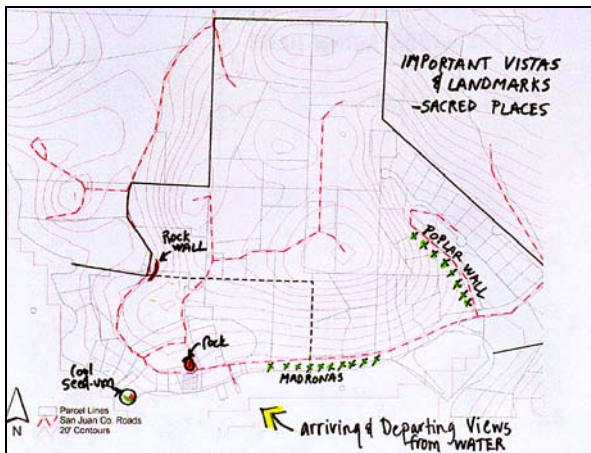
Soils. Soils in the area are predominantly rocky, with lower lying areas including clay soils and more porous glacial deposits⁵. Upland rocky soils have little moisture holding capacity, and are more suitable for timber than pasture. The soils including clay layers are suitable for agriculture or timber.

⁵ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *San Juan County Soil Survey*, 1962.

Porous glacial soils are excessively drained for agriculture and are best suited for forestry.

2.2.2. Visual Conditions.

There are woods along the edges of the village, both inside and outside the boundary, that visually signify where the village begins and ends. Most of the undeveloped area is wooded, but there are sizeable open meadow areas within it, as well as bare rock knolls. For the most part, ridgelines in the hilly northern area are unbroken by houses or other structures, so that the appearance looking north from the main road and from the ferry landing is largely rural. Several important vistas and landmarks are identified in the figure below.⁶



2.2.3. Shoreline Resources.

The bay, on Harney Channel, supports eelgrass that is a critical habitat for herring spawning and feeding, and is susceptible to harm or loss from direct substrate disturbance, from shading by over-water structures, and from sedimentation. Sand lance also inhabit waters just off the shore and burrow in the sand to rest and when disturbed. Sand lance are important food for herring as well as salmon. The steep, clay bank just east of the ferry landing is eroding and will eventually endanger the stability of the road just above it. The tidelands here, where the beach is of mixed cobbles and mud, are publicly owned, but public access to them is not readily available from the land side without further damage to the slope and the spawning substrate on the beach below.

⁶ Figure 8, Orcas Village Steering Committee Final Report, November 1999

A stretch of the of tidelands east from the Orcas Store was designated by Ordinance 25-2002 as a marine protected area and is protected as the Orcas Bay Tidelands Preserve through the San Juan County Land Bank. This area is to be protected by this plan from future moorage development. (See Appendix B)

Because of the sensitivity of the Orcas Bay tidelands east of the ferry landing and the volume of ferry and boat movements in Harney Channel this plan provides for limited moorage development to protect sensitive resources, to maintain the visual character and scale of the village shoreline, and to avoid navigational conflicts.

- The existing Bay Head marina may expand within but not beyond the existing boat basin, subject to applicable regulations.
- The existing Russell's Landing facility may be expanded to provide for no more than twenty moorage spaces.
- The existing facility serving the Puddin' Head Park condominium development may not be expanded in moorage space.
- Existing commercial uses of existing facilities are not prohibited; future modification or expansion to these commercial uses shall be subject to the applicable provisions of the San Juan County Code and applicable state and federal law.
- Moorage facilities serving residential uses abutting the Orcas Village shoreline are subject to SJCC 18.50.190(G) and other applicable provisions of that section of the code and the policies of the Shoreline Master Program.

2.3. HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

A to this plan is a historical summary of events at Orcas Village gathered by members of the steering committee.

The important role of Orcas Village to Orcas Island was established in 1885, when William E.

Sutherland patented the land at the present ferry dock and built the dock, warehouse and general store. In 1900, he commissioned Joseph Van Bogaert, who had homesteaded the land between Orcas and West Sound and built many houses, to build a hotel. The hotel was finished in 1904.

2.4. COMMUNITY SURVEY

A survey questionnaire was mailed to all owners within the village boundary and all business owners in July of 1999. The survey asked a number of questions about the respondents and their opinions about various planning issues affecting the village. Respondents tended to be full-time residents who had lived on Orcas for some time. There was nearly universal agreement among respondents that a high priority should be placed on protecting the natural environment, preserving open space, limiting population growth, prohibiting marinas and out-of-scale developments, and providing community review of all new developments. More than 80% of respondents gave these issues a high or medium priority in ranking issues by their importance.

Somewhat lower priority was assigned to improving water supply, providing adequate public parking, and establishing architectural standards for new development, with high and medium priority assigned by 58% to 74% of respondents. Improving the ferry system received high or medium priority from 56%. No other listed goal received more than 40% high and medium priority among the respondents.

2.5. LAND USE, LAND DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

The population of San Juan County is projected by the County to grow at a rate of approximately 2% per year over the next 20 years.⁷ Both the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census statistics showed Orcas Island's population growing faster than that of the County as a whole, and it is likely to continue to exceed the countywide rate over the next 20 years.

Figure 1 shows the land use designations for the area around Orcas Village as established in the County's Comprehensive Plan. Densities vary within each land use category, but the maximum

⁷ San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Appendix 1, September 22, 2005

density permitted in rural lands is one unit per five acres. Maximum for agricultural resource lands is one unit per 10 acres, and for forest resource lands is one unit per 20 acres.

The area shown as the Orcas Village extended influence area includes an estimated [redacted] existing homes in 2007 [UPDATE]. Based on current permitted density, there is a potential for [redacted] units if each existing parcel is developed with a single dwelling unit, and [redacted] units if all parcels were divided to the maximum permitted by the Comprehensive Plan. Thus the maximum potential population is about [redacted]% of the existing population in the area within about three miles of Orcas Village.

There are 20.36 acres within the Commercial district. Of these, 11 acres are in commercial occupancies with slightly over 5 acres vacant or substantially vacant as of 2007. There are 120 acres within the Residential district in 69 parcels. At the current density of 2 acres per dwelling unit, only 3 additional units are possible except through a density bonus available for permanently affordable housing in a rural residential cluster (see SJCC 18.60.230).

This potential for the local area to grow will encourage some additional commercial development in the village, since at least some of the demand that creates the opportunity for the Orcas Store, gift shop and food services comes from local residents. However, by far the greatest driver of commercial demand in the village will be the growth of Orcas Island as a whole, since most of the local businesses get a substantial share of their sales from people passing through the ferry landing.

The image of Orcas Village varies with the seasons and the number of visitors to Orcas Island. On summer weekends, Orcas Village is a busy center of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular activity almost continuously through the day. Pulses of activity happen as ferries arrive and depart, but there is enough activity between ferries to keep the commercial district humming.

October brings a downturn in traffic volumes that reach a minimum in January and February, and many businesses keep short hours or close for the season. About a third of Orcas Island's residences are vacant except in summer according to the

Census, and many of those residing here most of the year seek sunnier climates for part of the winter. This cycle of the resident population combined with a low rate of tourism means a much slower pace in Orcas Village during the winter.

2.5.1. Village Boundary

Villages and hamlets have been included in the County's comprehensive plans since 1967, when the first conceptual plan for the County's development was adopted. In the 1979 Comprehensive Plan, which established zoning designations and densities on all parcels in the County, Orcas Village was designated for higher density than the surrounding rural area.

Under the Washington Growth Management Act, most lands are designated urban, rural or resource lands. Urban lands are intended to accommodate most population growth, and are intended to be developed at densities that make provision of urban services efficient. In practice, urban areas are typically planned to achieve an average density in residential areas of four units per acre or more.

In general, rural lands may not be divided to permit development at a density of more than one unit per five acres, although clustering of development while maintaining this density has been found consistent with the Act.

Much of Orcas Village was previously zoned for development at one unit per half acre, and many properties were developed at or near that density.

In early amendments to the Growth Management Act, provision was made for existing areas like Orcas Village, which are settlements that are more dense than rural development but are not large enough or dense enough to be classed as urban. Such areas are permitted to have infill development, but are not permitted to expand or to substantially change their character. Under the language of the act, counties are to "limit and contain" these areas in their land use regulations.

The boundary of Orcas Village was established under these provisions of the Growth Management Act for "limited areas of more intensive rural development," or LAMIRDs, as they are commonly called.⁸

⁸ RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d).

2.5.2. Residential Density

In the October 2000 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the Board of County Commissioners adopted a residential density of one unit per two acres as the maximum for new land divisions in Orcas Village. This density reflects the pattern of land division for undeveloped parcels within the village.

Providing affordable housing for working people is a significant problem for the future of the islands. Settlements such as Orcas Village provide an opportunity for density that makes affordable housing possible. Rural residential clusters, which permit developments for affordable housing with a density of up to two units per acre in rural areas regardless of density permitted for other development, are one means by which affordable housing can be provided in activity centers like Orcas Village. Because of the limitation of this provision of the development code to 100% affordable housing as the occupants' primary residence, few parcels are expected to be used for rural clusters. Rural residential clusters are permitted in the Village Residential district.

2.5.3. Commercial Development

Commercial development is important to provide goods and services to residents and other businesses, local jobs, and income for business owners. However, commercial development is typically a substantial generator of traffic by employees and customers, and requires substantial area devoted to parking. Food service businesses are substantial users of water and generators of sewage. Local systems have limited capacity to handle any of these impacts, and the terrain and geology of the area make growth of these systems problematic.

The alternative land use map plans presented in *Orcas Village Activity Center Plan – Preliminary Alternatives* receiving the greatest favor were those alternatives showing a limited commercial area. The commercial area represents the extent of existing commercial retail uses. Although a smaller commercial area than what currently exists was favored by a majority of respondents to the survey and those involved in the public process, Orcas Village provides an important local commercial

function, and existing commercial uses should remain conforming uses within a commercial area.

The commercial district, bounded by the ferry holding area and parcels fronting on Orcas Road between the entrance to the ferry holding area and the ferry loading ramp, is primarily dedicated to providing goods and services to people waiting in the ferry lanes, providing services to people staying at the Orcas Hotel, and providing limited tourist services to walk-on day visitors to Orcas Island. Secondly, it provides limited services to residents of the areas nearby. In order to minimize pedestrian, vehicular and parking conflicts in this area, no substantial additional intensity of commercial development should be permitted as long as disembarking ferry traffic uses this segment of Orcas Road as the primary access to Orcas Island.

These limitations are based further on the following:

- Expanding the commercial area will allow more retail businesses that will increase the attraction of Orcas Village as a destination location. Such an outcome would be expected to increase traffic and parking problems.
- Expanding the commercial area will put additional pressure on important shoreline and marine resources already under stress from existing conditions.
- The need for a new road or significant road widening will be reduced if there is no significant increase in the village commercial area.

The steering committee strongly felt that local residents should have the ability to conduct businesses from their homes if these businesses have limited impacts on adjacent residences, produce few vehicle trips and do not use substantial water. The County's provisions for home occupations require that the owner live on the premises. If commercial uses were permitted in residential areas, they could be a sole use of the property and could be operated by someone other than the owner of the property, who may not even be an island resident. This plan prohibits commercial uses in residential areas except in the form of home occupations incidental to the residential use of the property.

In order to manage traffic and parking, uses that would significantly increase traffic, require substantial parking, or uses that would increase the desirability of Orcas Village as a retail destination or employment center, are not permitted. Most commercial uses that are permitted are limited in size to ensure that their market is tourist-oriented or local rather than island-wide. The size limit for most uses is 2,000 square feet, which for typical retail uses means no more than about eight employees and 100 or so vehicle trips per day with 10 in the peak traffic hour. [REVISIT?] Restaurants and drinking places have the potential for significantly greater impacts, as well as substantial water use, and are effectively limited by the need to provide parking and obtain adequate water. Most permitted uses are required to obtain a provisional, discretionary or conditional use permit. Prohibited uses that already exist in the village are permitted to continue as non-conforming uses. If circulation facilities are modified in the future so that parking and traffic problems are reduced in the Village, a change to the list of permitted uses or the size of uses may be appropriate.

One problem that has been identified with commercial zoning is that "yes" uses under the UDC (those allowed without a land use permit) may be modified in ways that would substantially increase their impact on traffic or parking with no project review and opportunity to impose project-specific limits or mitigation measures. Therefore nearly all commercial uses permitted are required to obtain some sort of permit in order to ensure that future changes in the use or occupancy will require review of these requirements.

Projects that may meet a community need, such as a community center, are permitted throughout the village, but require a conditional use permit. The conditional use permit process requires a public hearing, and the use may be made subject to detailed conditions to ensure development compatible with the village.

Parking lots have been allowed in all land use categories subject to a conditional use permit. Parking, especially commuter parking, is greatly needed within the village and is fully consistent with the role of Orcas Village as primarily a ferry landing.

2.6. CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Locally generated traffic and through traffic not destined for the ferry landing are easily accommodated on local roadways in Orcas Village except at times when ferry traffic causes momentary peaks.

Ferry traffic impacts. Ferry traffic causes pulses of traffic on Orcas Road after ferries unload, resulting in 5-minute northbound traffic peaks determined by ferry capacity. These peaks are six to eight times the daytime average for similar periods. Broader peaks of southbound traffic occur as people arrive for ferries, with 15-minute southbound peaks 30 minutes prior to departure that are approximately double the 15-minute daytime average.

Within the village, both departures and arrivals result in periods of high intensity traffic and parking on Orcas Road at the ferry landing. This is exacerbated by peaks in the movement of pedestrians and bicycle riders through this intersection at the same time.

Ferry parking impacts. As significant as the ferry arrival traffic peaks are the ferry departure parking peaks, which may use lanes normally available for traffic movement or constrain roadway width available. On many summer and holiday weekends, ferry traffic at peak departure periods is staged outside of the normal ferry parking areas as ferry overloads mean that more than one ferry load of vehicles must be accommodated. During these periods, cars are staged on Orcas Road north of the entrance to the ferry holding area, and on Orcas Hill Road adjacent to the Orcas Hotel.

The ferry landing is the starting point for Orcas Road, which is the main arterial on Orcas Island. It is the only direct route to all points on the island other than the rural and residential areas to the east and northeast of the landing served by Killebrew Lake Road or by private roads.

Potential Impacts of Ferry Traffic Increases. Ferry traffic patterns of pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles dominate the traffic problems at the ferry landing. Future increases in ferry service as population grows are expected despite a current revenue crisis, and the potential impacts need to be anticipated in local planning. Unless an additional

ferry slip is provided or larger ferries serve the island, peak traffic would not be substantially affected – it would be the number of peaks and average flow each day that would change. Under these conditions, improvements made to handle current traffic conflicts would remain effective in the future, and ferry traffic could be increased without significant additional adverse effects. Overload parking volumes on summer Sundays would be likely to continue to grow, however.

Opportunities to expand the two-lane roadway to accommodate additional traffic volumes are limited by steep, rocky terrain. Alternative routes were found to have high environmental and construction costs and would adversely affect existing residential areas. Residents and neighbors of Orcas Village must contend with periodic delays and lack of parking at peak periods within the village. There are few areas to safely load and unload passengers, and little available parking due to limitations of terrain and right of way. In addition, there is no public road currently serving the northern interior of the village area and no interconnected system of private roads.

Despite the severity of these problems, particularly in summer, and the frequent complaints among neighbors and residents, there was little public support for new road construction within the village expressed in the survey results and in public community meetings.

The acquisition of additional right-of-way, loss of natural vegetation and changes to natural terrain are likely costs of any new road development. The County's report, Orcas Village Activity Center Plan – Preliminary Alternatives, recommended that a full environmental analysis and engineering study of traffic circulation, road location and parking alternatives be done.

A circulation study considering Orcas Village traffic and nonvehicular circulation issues was conducted in 2001. This study reviewed ferry traffic and ferry holding, local traffic, pedestrian and bicycle activity and parking in the core of Orcas Village. A number of recommendations for short-term, intermediate-term and long-term actions to improve circulation are included in the final report of this study.

Ferry unloading places short pulses of vehicles on the local roadway system at a rate of vehicles per

minute that is many times the average traffic volume. This rate is close to or may exceed the roadway capacity for uninterrupted flow during that short period. These pulses of 50 to 150 vehicles typically last three to five minutes or more, and cause delays of local cross traffic which is stop-controlled at all major intersections. Very few of the vehicles offloading are destined for the commercial area of Orcas Village immediately around the ferry landing. Most are destined for other areas of Orcas Island, either north along Orcas Road (90% or more of offloading vehicles), or east along Killebrew Lake Road.

Ferry unloading generates vehicles at approximately the rate the local roadway system can move them away from the ferry landing if the flow is not interrupted by cross traffic or pedestrians. Pedestrians and bicyclists leaving the ferry, pedestrians and bicyclists waiting to board the ferry, and local traffic (including traffic generated by pick-up and drop-off of walk-on traffic) crosses Orcas Road during the unloading period. These flows of people and cars conflict with this offloading traffic and cause backups onto the ferry, increasing the time required to offload the ferry.

Ferry loading takes longer per vehicle than unloading because of the time required to position each vehicle on the car deck of the ferry. In general, ferries cannot accept cars during loading as fast as they can be delivered by the local roadway system. During loading, pedestrian, cyclist and pick-up and drop-off activity have decreased substantially from that during offloading. While these flows interrupt the flow of vehicles onto the ferry, they typically do not interrupt the flow sufficiently to cause a substantial delay in loading the ferry.

Most ferry traffic arriving at Orcas Village comes from the north on Orcas Road, and does not need to travel through the congested commercial area of the village to reach the ferry holding area. In addition, departing traffic accumulates over a substantial period of time, typically 30 minutes to one hour or more prior to departure. This much slower peak of traffic generated by departing ferries creates little conflict or congestion on local roadways, except for the few minutes during which it conflicts with pulses of offloading ferry traffic at the left turn into the ferry holding area.

Based on these observations, the most important conflicts exist during ferry offloading. Measures that reduce conflicts during offloading, getting arriving traffic out of the village quickly and with least conflict with other traffic, will be the measures that are most effective in improving safety and improving the level of service in the ferry landing area. Once the measures to reduce these conflicts are taken, additional measures to reduce other conflicts in the Village can further improve traffic flow and pedestrian circulation.

In 2005-2006 Washington State Ferries produced a study of the Orcas Island Terminal which included recommendations for short-term improvements to better mark the pedestrian route along and across the road for people walking on or off the ferry and add a temporary long-term parking area on property purchased by the ferry system. The latter has not been budgeted and it's not known when funds will be allocated for any terminal improvements. San Juan County Public Works, however, is taking the lead on providing for pedestrian route improvements.

Washington State Ferries' report also acknowledged the County's proposal to re-route vehicle unloading⁹ but this also remains unbudgeted.

2.7. DESIGN AND AESTHETICS

The aesthetic character of Orcas Village is important to both residents and visitors. The visual quality of the human and natural environment affects people's decisions to live in Orcas Village and to visit it for recreation. Aesthetic character is one of the most important things people value about Orcas Village, and is therefore worthy of attention in the community plan.

Public desire to retain the scale and character of Orcas Village was strongly expressed in the results of the property owner's survey and in the public meetings. High levels of concern about appropriate scale and preservation of the landscape dominated many discussions throughout this planning process.

Designating land uses within the village is not sufficient to ensure that the existing scale and

⁹ Orcas Village Traffic and Circulation Study, San Juan County Planning and Public Works Departments, 2001-2002

character of the village are maintained. It will be necessary to be more specific about scale within the commercial and residential areas and address specific architectural design elements that create the village's visual qualities.

The existing environment of Orcas Village is dominated by nature. The tree-covered hills and natural rock outcrops are taller and greater in mass and coverage of the ground than any of the features created by people. Only in a few places in the center of activity at the ferry landing does the sum of human modifications dominate the visual environment.

Orcas Road/Killebrew Lake Road is the single human feature that has resulted in the greatest modification of the landscape in the village. With an area of more than 100,000 square feet of asphalt and gravel and cut slopes and fill on its course from boundary to boundary, and a volume of cut and fill on the order of 10,000 cubic yards or more, representing movement of more than 20,000 tons of earth and rock, the road is by a substantial margin the village's largest human structure.

The largest structures for human occupancy in Orcas Village are the Elwha and her sisters, ephemeral creatures appearing regularly at the ferry landing. With a length of 382 feet and width of 73 feet, these super class ferries have a floor area above the water line about eight times that of the Orcas Hotel, with the tops of their wheelhouses 50 feet or so above the waterline.

The scale of permanent structures for human occupancy in Orcas Village is modest, limited to structures capable of handling a hundred or so people at one time. The Orcas Hotel is the largest, at 7,500 square feet and a height of 30 feet or so, made further dominant visually by its position on a rock outcrop about 20 feet above Orcas Road at the landing. The Orcas Store is second in scale at about 5,000 square feet. Typical single-family detached residences range in size from 1,200 to 2,500 square feet, with a few larger or smaller. Mobile homes, among the smallest, are typically about 400 to 500 square feet in floor area.

The specific standards and guidelines for design included in the plan and regulations are based on the principles outlined below.

Defining the Village

Edges and entry points help define both settlements and the rural lands beyond them. If edges and entry points are clear, people have a sense of transition from one area to another. Most adjust their sense of appropriate activities and behavior to the change in character they perceive.

Vegetated buffers and setbacks along Orcas Road and along the northern boundary of the village are established in order to maintain a distinct edge and transition to rural areas west and north of the village boundary.

Natural Vegetation and Natural Features

Removal of existing vegetation to accommodate new development should be limited to that necessary for construction and fire safety. In addition to preserving the aesthetic character of the village, this requirement helps minimize stormwater runoff, maintain slope stability, and maximize groundwater recharge.

Village Scale and Character

Maintaining village scale and character means both limiting the size of structures and ensuring that structures have an architectural character that maintains human scale. Structures that are massive, have large blank walls, or use materials and finishes more urban or industrial in character (such as polished stone, glass curtain walls, exposed steel frames, corrugated metal) in areas visible to the public detract from the village scale and character. Design standards specifying maximum size of structures, limiting roof types, and limiting uninterrupted facades are intended to meet the objective of maintaining village scale and character without otherwise directing the design of buildings.

Building Size. The County's Unified Development Code (UDC) provides for a wide range of building sizes that reflect the needs for a range of commercial uses. This wide range of uses and sizes is not appropriate for the conditions in Orcas Village.

A size limit of 2,000 square feet for new commercial structures is appropriate both to limiting the potential for uses that are large generators of traffic and for keeping new commercial structures in scale with the current character of the village. The Orcas Hotel should continue to be the dominant structure in the village visually with this limit on new commercial

development in the Village core. 2,000 square feet is within the middle of the range of floor areas of new single-family detached houses constructed in the County.

and preference for certain exterior building materials.

In the case of redevelopment of existing commercial development, however, allowance is made for structure sizes and configurations that exceed this limit to a degree consistent with the scale of existing development, and for modest expansions that individual sites may accommodate without thwarting the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Lot Coverage. Because of the importance of natural features such as rock outcrops and forested slopes in Orcas Village, minimizing lot coverage by structures is appropriate. The terrain of Orcas Village is not suited to a cluster of commercial buildings with the high lot coverage typical of a commercial center. The Unified Development Code does not limit lot coverage for small commercial structures. A lot coverage limit of 50% permits substantial flexibility in commercial development while providing open space, preservation of natural vegetation and natural features, and reducing storm runoff.

Existing countywide regulations in the Unified Development Code adequately address village concerns for lighting, signs, shared parking, and other aspects of new development in the village.

Building Height. The UDC permits a height of 30 feet in village and hamlet commercial districts. Because of the sloping terrain and small scale of nearly all structures in Orcas Village, this height limit would allow new structures to dwarf most existing structures. A height limit of 20 feet is appropriate for Orcas Village. Figure X describes how building heights are measured.

Building Style, Materials and Finishes. Nearly all structures in the village today are small wood structures with pitched roofs. Design standards for commercial areas similar to those of the Eastsound Subarea Plan are included in the plan and regulations in order to maintain this character in any new commercial, institutional and multi-family residential structures.

Among the conditions included in these standards are pitched roofs with a minimum of 4 in 12 pitch,

3. Orcas Village Plan

Revise and import map

3.1. GOALS AND ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

The plan for Orcas Village is based on the following goals and organizing principles.

1. Orcas Village provides three principal functions:
 - The ferry landing serving Orcas Island, including limited retail and tourist services for day visitors, people waiting for the ferry, and people staying at the Orcas Hotel.
 - A small residential hamlet.
 - The convenience retail center and community services center for the immediately surrounding rural area within approximately three miles of the ferry landing.
2. Orcas Village is an important entry point to Orcas Island and San Juan County. The natural visual aesthetic character of Orcas Village is an important feature of this entry point. This natural aesthetic includes the predominance of natural forest vegetation and exposed natural rocks in the view from the water and along Orcas Road and Killebrew Lake Road away from the village. Development projects and public improvements including utilities, roadways and ferry terminal facilities should be strictly limited and designed to protect and enhance this natural visual character.
3. The small scale of commercial and residential structures is important to the feeling of both the commercial and residential areas of Orcas Village. In order to maintain this scale and character, and to protect the historic Orcas Hotel as the dominant structure in the village, all new structures should be limited in size and should be architecturally compatible with village character.
4. In order to protect the character of existing residential areas of Orcas Village, commercial development should be prohibited in residential areas.
5. Because of the limitations of terrain and the traffic circulation characteristics of the ferry landing, the commercial development of the

village should be limited to that needed to serve local needs and ferry travelers. Orcas Village should not be the site of large commercial facilities with island-wide markets, such as major hardware, grocery, drug or general merchandise stores, or businesses with a large number of employees.

6. In the long term, conflicts among ferry travel modes and between ferry traffic and local activities should be reduced by routing disembarking vehicles up through the ferry holding area, allowing through traffic to bypass the village commercial core.

3.2. LAND USE PLAN

3.2.1. Boundary.

The Boundary of Orcas Village is established on the Official Map. Orcas Village is classified as a Limited Area of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD) under the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.070 (5)(d)). Under the GMA, LAMIRDs are to be limited and contained, and are not intended to serve as centers of substantial new growth and development. LAMIRDs may be infilled with uses that reflect the existing patterns of development.

3.2.2. Land Use Districts.

Two land use districts are established in Orcas Village. The areas within each district are shown on the Village Plan map, Figure 2. Uses permitted within each district are listed in Table 2 of the regulations.

3.2.2.1. Orcas Village Residential.

This district is established as a strictly residential district. Limited other necessary uses such as utilities may be permitted in the Village Residential district. Commercial uses are limited to home occupations.

3.2.2.2. Orcas Village Commercial.

The Orcas Village Commercial District is established to provide for retail and service uses in the commercial core of Orcas Village. The primary purpose of this commercial district is to provide goods and services to tourists, those passing through the ferry landing, and local residents within approximately three miles of Orcas Village. Its

secondary purpose is to provide for a range of commercial and service uses meeting local needs and generating less traffic and tourist demand than tourist-serving uses. Orcas Village is not intended to be the site of larger commercial enterprises with an island-wide market or with a substantial number of employees.

3.2.4 RELATIONSHIP TO SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM

San Juan County adopted a Unified Development Code (UDC) in 1998. Orcas Village was specified as an “Activity Center” with interim controls in place until such time as an Orcas Village Plan was adopted.

The Shoreline Master Program includes the policies of Element B, Section 3 of the Comprehensive Plan, the regulations in SJCC 18.50 and the procedures specified for shoreline use and development in SJCC 18.80. The Shoreline Master Program policies, regulations and procedures apply in addition to those in this Orcas Village Plan.

Following SJCC 18.10.050 (G), where this plan is more restrictive it supersedes the Unified Development Code and the regulations of the Shoreline Master Program. The policies of the Shoreline Master Program, however, are not superseded.

Concurrently with adoption of this Orcas Village Plan the shoreline environment designation boundaries are amended to conform the Urban shoreline with the Village Commercial District boundary and the Rural and Rural Residential shorelines to the Village Residential District boundary.

3.3. CIRCULATION.

The purposes of the circulation improvements outlined in this plan are:

1. Reduce existing conflicts between pedestrians, bicycles and motor vehicles in the commercial core and along the roadways serving Orcas Village in order to improve safety, improve convenience of travel, and protect the peace

New commercial uses are limited to 2,000 square feet in floor area and 50% lot coverage.

and tranquility of village life and the natural environment for residents and visitors.

2. Promote a smooth flow of traffic to and from the ferry landing during times of ferry loading and unloading.
3. Provide safe places near the ferry landing for groups of pedestrians and cyclists to stage their activities on Orcas Island.
4. Provide convenient short and intermediate-term (up to 72 hours) parking for retail customers, visitors and ferry commuters.
5. Coordinate land development with circulation improvements so that additional loads are not placed on the circulation system until measures to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflicts are in place.
6. Implement the specific circulation improvements outlined in the circulation plan (Figure x) through the County’s regular program of roadway improvements. These improvements include:
 - a. Shoulder widening at key locations to provide safe places for people to walk off the roadway.
 - b. Roadway striping, texturing or other markings to clarify pedestrian and bicycle crossings and vehicular movement.
 - c. Improvements to roadways and ferry holding areas, in cooperation with Washington State Ferries, so that traffic exiting the ferries can be directed through the current ferry holding area to reach Orcas Road instead of turning left through the core pedestrian commercial area of the village.

In addition to the land circulation improvements contemplated above, the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Element B, Section 6.4 C, identifies the desirability of access for outer island

residents near ferry landings to enhance those residents' access to the ferry transportation system.. The county should consider opportunities to ensure pickup/dropoff public access for this purpose at Russell's Landing.

REFERENCES

Appendix A.

A History of Land Uses in Orcas Village

Orcas Village has had an economic impact on more than its residents, especially since ferries and automobiles have become speedier and the volume and pace of traffic has increased. As both a gateway for ferry traffic and a resource serving the needs of locals, it has evolved to meet the changing nature of these two groups of users.

Before the depression (1929-33) and World War II (1941-45), logging to supply firewood for the steamboats, fishing for market, or fruit growing for mainland markets were activities to bring cash and supplied the daily needs of homeowners. When there was only one ferry per day linking the islands to Bellingham, and cars and roads did not make it easy to see the rest of the island for a quick tour, even Orcas had a “destination resort” in the Hotel and its cabins. People came for longer vacations. Gardening to supply food for visitors and for homesteaders to make a living occupied much time and used the energy of the entire family. Now our two B&Bs and the Hotel are mainly involved with a faster and broader “travel society” and the gift shops and fast food shops cater to this transient aspect of our lives.

The Orcas Village was a popular cordwood depot for the “Mosquito Ferry Fleet” steaming through the waters of the San Juan Islands. The ample supply of wood in the surrounding hills employed many workmen and a tent city soon formed on the knolls overlooking the ferry landing. Along with Olga, West Sound, Eastsound, and Deer Harbor, the Landing became a popular destination for visitors and commerce on the island.

Ferry traffic and people waiting for it have become a dominating factor in the village. From the relocation of the roads and parking space to the “service” businesses, the influence of the ferry schedule then spreads to the residents of the surrounding areas in planning the optimum time to go for the mail or go to the market. In the early 1900s there was a bulb farm in Warm Valley, and beef and sheep were raised for meat and wool, and poultry for meat and eggs. Our “service” businesses over the years have included: fuel oil storage for home deliveries, oil and gas for automobile and marine customers, both resident and visitor; and automobile service station; the general purpose store, bicycle rental and repair, electric appliances and repair, a barber shop, dress shops, liquor store and wine shop, real estate offices, and farmers

markets.

Another important kind of economic activity has been our “cottage industries.” Around the Village area, we can list the following: Stanley Kepler’s unique rat traps, Doc Russell’s cod jigs, aircraft and boat buildings, paper and book making, baking, spinning, weaving, sewing, candles, telecommuters, electrical equipment, electronics repair, photography, woodcarving, glass ornaments, stained glass, jewelry, fine art painting, piano rebuilding, authors of prose and poetry. To our knowledge, neither businesses nor the cottage industries have produced millionaires, but add valuable income for working families.

We can salute the many Orcas residents who have volunteered at the Library, the Community Center, the museum, schools and daycare center, senior center, and fire department. We are thinking of the ladies of “Stitch and Gossip” who started contributing handwork to the war effort in WWII and continued their money-making schemes to support those activities mentioned above, bringing fun to community social events. They have always been a responsive, caring group. It is clear that these cooperative efforts on the part of many Village area residents serve to make Orcas Village a place that feels like a HOME, imbued with a much deeper meaning than simply “making a living.”

Orcas Store. There is no doubt about who started the first store on Orcas – Paul Hubbs. But, there is a question about its location. Fred Splitstones describes it as being in a small bay across from Blakely Island where Hubbs had leased land to run sheep. It is known that islanders used to row great distances on various errands, so it is possible that the presently named Grindstone Harbor was the site of that store, though it’s more across from Shaw than Blakely.

Then, there is the Lindholm family tradition that “Sweeney Beach” below their home site was the location of the first store. It was owned and operated by Stephen Sweeney, the uncle of Nellie S. (for Sweeney) Milton, the beloved teacher and superintendent of Orcas School.

There is greater certainty about what happened to Sweeney’s store. He traded it for a boat from a Mr. Edwards who then sold it to W.E. Sutherland who later moved its contents by boat and wheelbarrow

to the warehouse on his dock by the Landing. Mr. Sutherland turned over the operation of the store to E. C. Van Moorhem who became the owner when Mr. Sutherland died. For the next 40 years it remained a general merchandise store, and by World War II it also housed the Post Office.

At the time the store and part of the ferry dock burned in 1949, Clyde and Dorothy Brown owned the hotel and feared for its safety. Clyde got up on the roof of the hotel to water the shingles and became a lookout and spotter of sparks to those on the ground who were trying to contain the blaze. Clyde maintains that the only thing that saved the whole village from going up in smoke was the usual summer northwest wind.

Property owners Bob and Mary Schoen urged Bus and Esther Sheehan to come from Kent to run the store they planned to rebuild. The Sheehans were wary of the proximity to the oil and gas storage as well as a gas station and knew their insurance would be prohibitive. Agreement was reached to build a new store on the east side of the ferry landing, and that was finished by the summer of 1950. With the aid of the large equipment on hand for the rebuilding of the ferry slip, the warehouse on the end of the old commercial dock was moved to the burned-out site, which is now the location of Margaret and Mary Russell's gift shop on the west side.

Bus and Esther's efficient and friendly management of the store soon built them a reputation that drew customers from far and near. Bus's superior fresh meat drew many from around the islands as well as cruising families who stocked up at the Orcas Store. When they sold after 17 years of service to the community, tending the water system for the fire department and assisting medical emergencies, the habit and expectations of the islanders withstood the rocky years when two subsequent owners were unsuccessful in maintaining the quality of the Orcas Store.

It was with relief and pleasure that the community greeted Gordy and Lori Petersen who came from Bellingham to manage the store. Their tenure of 13 years was beset with growing anxiety when it became obvious the owners of the building were unwilling to invest anything in maintenance. By the time the new and present owners took over, the structure needed extensive and basic repairs.

Owing to a limit of one year for the store on the shoreline to be inactive before losing the

"grandfathered" waiver for commercial operations under the shoreline management act, the store had to reopen and remain operational during the next 8 months of remodeling. Craig Sanders, manager, the staff, and Dale Linnes, owner, have weathered the transition and are proving to the community they intend to serve in the tradition of Sutherland, Van Moorhems, Sheehans, and Petersens.

Orcas Hotel. In 1885, William E. Sutherland patented the land at the present ferry dock and built the dock, warehouse and general store. He hired Octavia Van Moorhem to cook for the waiting passengers at the dock. Octavia lived on a farm which she and her husband, Constant, homesteaded on the hill above the dock.

They built a log cabin there and raised their own fruit, vegetables, chickens and pigs and started raising their family, daughter Irene born in 1897 and three sons Emile "Bud" (1898), Raymond (1901) and William (1903). In spite of heavy farm work and pregnancies, Octavia prepared her famous fruit pies and fried chicken in the little cabin behind the post office down on the dock while Constant managed the store.

Eventually, Mr. Sutherland saw the need for a hotel to accommodate stranded passengers and visitors. In 1900, he commissioned Octavia's father, Joseph Van Bogaert, who had homesteaded all the land between Orcas and West Sound and built many houses, to build a hotel, beginning in 1900 and finishing in 1904. When the hotel was complete, Mr. Sutherland and all six Van Moorhems moved in.

Guests in the early days would pitch tents around the hotel and take their meals in the dining room. Bathing was done in the sea at Curry's Cove, west of the landing. Five stoves had to be kept in firewood by the boys, Irene did the housekeeping, an aunt did the laundry, and Constant tended the gardens. Except for staples, the food for the hotel was grown on the family farm. After the addition of the dining room in 1916, tent cabins were built to the west on the bank above the water. These cabins had wood floors with half walls and roof, open areas covered with removable canvas. At first the water supply had to be carried by pail. Over the hill by the shore was a two-story building housing a dance floor and warehouse.

When William E. Sutherland died in 1926, Octavia and Constant inherited all his Orcas property, including the hotel, dock, store, and all the property

that included Puddin' Head Park, Cottage Gift Shop and Gasoline Alley. After 29 years of continuous operation of the Orcas Hotel, Octavia succumbed to cancer in 1933. Her daughter, Irene, had helped with the management and continued to operate it until the winter of 1936-37. After Irene and her family moved off the island, Constant had several people operate the hotel for him. Upon his death in 1941, the hotel and surrounding property was left to his eldest son Emile, or "Bud." Bud had run the store for years and his brother Ray operated the gas station where the Cottage Gift Shop is now. After Bud's wife died, he sold the hotel to Marjorie Jackson, when then sold the hotel to Clyde and Dorothy Brown in 1948.

Clyde and Dorothy operated the hotel from 1948 to 1950, more as a rooming house, for the men constructing buildings on the Kaiser estate. The first winter was bitterly cold, and Clyde exhausted himself keeping all five stoves going. This became too much Clyde, so they sold the hotel to Dr. E. Ralph Pinney and his wife, Agnes, who had three able-bodied sons who could chop all that wood. The Pinneys really wanted to have the hotel as a private residence, yet kept it open.

The Pinneys were renowned for their meticulous housekeeping. The work was hard on them, for most of the guests were loggers. Agnes was known to follow the loggers around, and clean up the mud from their boots as best she could. Jim, who died in West Sound in 1992, fondly remembered the Hotel as providing a good living for the family until they sold it in 1954, although they only took in \$5,000 per year. The Hotel has been many different businesses under many different proprietors since that time, but has always maintained its original Victorian charm. However the handsome building was slowly falling apart and was eventually converted to offices as it couldn't meet modern health and safety standards.

In 1985, the Orcas Hotel was proudly designated a National Historic Landmark, and saved from the wrecker's ball. In that same year, the first and second floors of the Hotel were properly restored to their Victorian heritage by Barbara and John Jamieson, and rooms were once again available for visitors to rest their travel-weary bodies. The work involved new concrete foundations, new timbers, new kitchen, and Victorian period decoration. Because of the chronic water shortage at the landing, low-flow showerheads and low-flush toilets were installed. Although the Washington

State Ferry system has converted most of the surrounding acreage into a ferry parking and operational staging area, the Hotel has remained intact, and has even restored some of the historically renowned English cottage gardens.

Roads. The county roads in the Orcas Village area are little changed from the pre-WWII era, but maps and information from people who know the Mt. Woolard are confirm that there were formerly many connections between Horseshoe Highway (now Orcas Road) and Dolphin Bay Road. Logging "skid" roads are so numerous and unmapped that it is sometimes difficult to locate individual properties. This has been an undesirable problem for emergency services, but suits many residents who desire privacy. The new E911 system is designed to resolve this issue.

Mary Schoen tells of the difficulty of separating the cars for various destinations out of the long, long line when cars used to wait at the side of the main road for the two daily ferry runs. Drivers needing to bypass the line to reach homes east of the Village or to drop off foot passengers would often arouse suspicions among those who were waiting. The new access and parking area for the ferry traffic, completed in 1980, was a much needed and overdue solution.

Road surfacing has continued as traffic has increased over the years. Pat Arnt of Grindstone Harbor solved the problem of not enough smoothing on Killebrew Lake Road by inviting the road maintenance supervisor to dinner. When his private car was subjected to the washboard effect (especially bad by Fire Station No. 6), road crews usually came by the following day.

Phones. There are 1909 Telephone directories in the museum from "Inter-Island Telephone Co." with Orcas Island names in them, but we do not yet know when the first phone line was laid on the ground or strung between trees to serve the neighbors of Orcas Landing. Nor do we know yet when the exchange was established in Eastsound in the Kimple residence that made it possible to call people on other lines on the island. We know of one Orcas resident who would drive clear to Eastsound to use the telephone in the booth outside of the exchange to avoid having neighbors listen in to her calls to her cousins in San Francisco.

1929 marked the linking up with the mainland system and other islands for long-distance phone services. Prior to that, each island had its own lines.

Cable crossing signs marked the positions of the underwater cables, which came to Orcas from Lummi, across Eastsound (the inlet) from Olga to White Beach, and from Orcas Village across Harney Channel to Shaw. The telephone company crews responsible for this expansion were housed in tents on property now owned by the O'Briens east of Orcas Landing. They were well fed by Mrs. Dale and her teenage helpers. Our information about that comes from one of the resulting romances, Norm and Ida (Lindholm) Kerr. He recalls that the logs for the poles had to be floated to the landing sites, set by other crews into blasted rock in areas cleared by them (there was no road between White Beach and Guthrie Cove), and wired by still other crews. The "state-of-the-art" equipment was one bulldozer (small cat), one mule, and many strong backs. When the job was completed, there was no lamenting when the "cat," which was parked too close to the steep bank, slowly inched its way over and into the water. It was the end of many frustrating days trying to keep it operating.

Orcas Island Fire Department form Mile

McCoy: My recollections of the early days of the Orcas Island Fire Department date to about the mid-fifties. It is my understanding that there was no formal fire department until about 1952 or 1953 at Orcas. Bus Sheehan, owner of the Orcas Store at that time was a fire commissioner along with John Allison, Fred Erickson and Richard Norton. When I moved to Orcas to stay in the fall of 1956, there were several pickup trucks parked around the island with about 200 gallon water tanks and small gear pump. Each truck also had a hose reel and about 150 or 200 feet of about 1-inch hose on it. It was a good effort, but any structure fire was usually a total loss by the time the rigs could get to the scene. They were handy for brush fires and chimney fires.

We had a 10-party crank phone in those days, and the operator in Eastsound would send out an alarm on the phone lines and most everyone would pick up the phone and ask where is the fire. The message became steadily fainter as more people picked up their receivers and "bled" the lines. There were no organized volunteers in those days. Everyone turned out to see if they could help in whatever way.

In 1950, after the Orcas Store and dock fire, the members of the Commercial Club voted to acquire a real fire truck. Bob Shoen, one of the members,

had seen the advertisement for one in Raymond, Washington. In flying over, he had seen a fully equipped rig. However, when he and Boyer went to pick it up, it had been stripped of all its necessary gear. It was an open-cab Seagrave, and Bob had to drive it back as far as his dad's shop in Seattle in pouring rain. There, the firemen next door directed him to a warehouse a few blocks away, where for \$500, Bob was able to purchase the hoses, pumps and equipment necessary to make it a complete rig again.

During the winter of 1958, Bus Sheehan asked for volunteers to attend an evening meeting at the Orcas Store. It was time to get organized and have drills. Prior to that time and thereafter, we did not drill with the rigs mostly because the department could not afford the gas and the apparatus was pretty simple. Usually, someone would run the trucks every month or so. The trick at Orcas was about a 1947 or 1948 Ford 1-ton pickup with a very low-g geared transmission and gear train. It was a straight six, but it moved the rig with a full water tank very well. It was parked at the Orcas Hotel and the ladies of "Stitch & Gossip" were also taught how to drive it and run it on a regular schedule to keep the battery up. The early meetings were irregular but Esther Sheehan always made plenty of cookies and coffee and they were very pleasant.

Somewhere around the mid-60s, Eastsound got a brand new 1966 Ford Class A pumper truck. They had to build or extend the shed to house it. I believe it was Fred Nichols garage. I believe it was in the early seventies the Department decided to hire a part-time paid chief. At that time, the building had been a well-equipped machine shop run early on by Glen Porter. In the mid-fifties, the second generation Porter brothers were running an auto repair shop and their mother lived upstairs where Christina's is now.

Chief Janke was a spirited person and had lots of enthusiasm. His wife became dispatcher and was tied to the phone full-time without pay during the first year of the upgraded phone system. After regular drilling was established which schedule exists to this day, each volunteer had a complete set of turnout gear: boots and hard-hat and leather gloves. At one of the early fires, Chief Janke told all of the people that weren't in the Department officially to get clear of the scene. Some of the long-time islanders who had paid taxes for years and donated toward the early rigs and equipment

were very offended.

In the early 1980s when the Orcas station was built and the 66 Ford from Eastsound was relegated to the new station, it had less than 6000 miles on it. I recall one incident that occurred with the old Ford pick-up at Orcas. There was a call for a chimney fire down White Beach way. I responded with the old Ford. When I went to start it we always left the hood up and air-cleaner off but sitting on the engine was a whiskey bottle on the windowsill next to the cab on the driver's side with gas in it. The engine seemed to start best if we'd give her a cap-full down the carburetor. I was hurrying so I gave her a shot from the bottle and spilled a few drops. Wouldn't you know, it backfired, the gas ignited but the engine started and sucked in most of the flames and the fan blew out the rest. That got some adrenaline going. When we got to the fire it had burned itself out. We didn't use the old rigs often, but it is my belief they were added not too long after the old open-cab Seagrave that Bob Schoen drove up from Raymond and Hoquiam in the winter around 1950 in the rain.

Orcas History Anecdotes. Water and sewer (or wells and septic systems) have been very important in the growth at the Orcas Landing area. Early residents had their own wells and outhouses, the way of life for newly inhabited areas, and adequate for the first hundred years or so. But with greater population and commercial activity, especially increased tourist traffic and with residents from areas and life styles that were accustomed to more water, changes had to be made. Wells needed to be deeper, water stored, and use had to be monitored from more efficient sources. Septic tanks were required and finally in the last ten years, a secondary sewage treatment system was installed on the hill above the hotel.

When the only public restrooms were two outhouses at the tide line of the sloping driveway to the warehouse and store and oil storage, fishing in the immediate area was foolhardy. Imagine the consternation of the parents who enjoyed the fish their youngsters caught for dinner when they learned the fish came from very close to the shore at the dock. No known illnesses resulted.

There are some people living now who remember Stanley Keppler as the postmaster when the Post Office was still in the old store. Stanley very often napped in his little office, and rather than disturb him, one simply reached in the cubby hole, pulled out the stamp drawer under the counter, selected

the stamps needed, and left the proper amount of cash. If Stanley happened to be out fishing at the nearby reef when a customer wanted to mail a package, it was easy to yell out to him and we would row in to perform the necessary transaction.

One very busy Sunday when Bob Schoen's floats at the landing were full of boats of all sizes and some being fueled up, the Coast Guard was headed full speed to the east in Harney Channel and its wake caused havoc. One boat was washed up onto the float, one woman had a heart attack, and the boat owners were scrambling to keep their boats from smashing into each other. Bob charged up to his radio and called the Coast Guard captain and in his inimitable and purple language informed the captain of the chaos.

The captain reacted immediately by ordering a helicopter to the scene and headed back to the landing. The helicopter was unable to land because of the swarms of people (Orkila had deposited campers who were investigating the low tide beach). When the Coast Guard boat came in to take the heart attack victim off to the mainland hospital, they had the rather common misfortune of entangling someone's line in one of the propellers. They had to limp to Anacortes on one engine. The wake problem is still with us due to speedy megayachts.

APPENDIX B - ORCAS BAY TIDELANDS PRESERVE

The Orcas Bay Tidelands Marine Protected Area Designation was adopted by Ordinance -2002.

The Stewardship and Management Plan for the Orcas Bay Tidelands Reserve was adopted by Ordinance 25-2002, December 31, 2002. The following is a summary of its objectives and use restrictions. The full text of the Management Plan may be obtained from the San Juan County Land Bank.

Objectives

To maintain the diverse habitats of Orcas Bay Tidelands Preserve in good ecological health.

To encourage and improve the understanding of the property's natural systems through conservation, education and research.

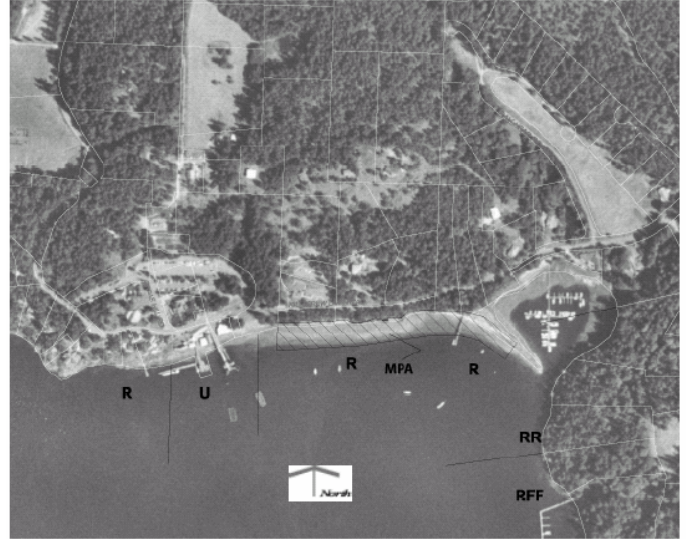
Summary of Use Restrictions

- *No camping*
- *No beach fires*
- *Daytime use only*
- *Dogs must be leashed*
- *Pedestrian access only*
- *Vehicles, bicycles and horses prohibited*
- *No firearms*
- *No hunting*
- *No commercial use*

Public Access

The public currently enjoys Orcas Bay Tidelands Preserve primarily as a scenic area, with open views across the tidelands from Orcas village and the busy Orcas ferry terminal. No public access to the preserve exists from adjacent uplands. Nonetheless, the tidelands receive occasional visitation from neighboring properties and through access via water.

While the Land Bank's primary stewardship goal focuses on protecting the tidelands' ecological and habitat values, access for scientific and educational purposes will also be encouraged. General public access for low-impact recreation may also be allowed, provided that such access does not detract from the property's outstanding ecological values.



MPA Marine Protected Area Shoreline Overlay Environment Designation
Area of Marine Protected Area Shoreline Overlay Environment Designation (approximate extent)

Appendix C - Water and Sewer Services

Water

Drinking water in Orcas Village is supplied by individual wells or by wells serving six privately-owned and operated community systems. The largest of these, Orcas Landing, Inc., a Group A system, is approved for 29 connections and had been at capacity until an additional source located outside of the village area was added to the system to allow 16 new hookups. These are limited to residential accounts, however. Only one commercial hookup to this system is not in use and is available to serve a commercial occupancy.

A second system, the Bangs Trust Group B system, is designed for connections but remains a two-user system. Washington State Ferries owns the majority of these potential connections with the rest held by two other parties. Extension of this system would require an upgrade to a Group A system.

Sewer

The entire village is served by a community sewer system operated by the Eastsound Sewer District, a public utility supported by a local improvement district. The facilities are comprised of septic tank effluent pump (STEP) systems connected by 4-inch sewer lines to a sewage lagoon treatment facility with a 400 foot long outfall pipe that discharges into Harney Channel. The system has a design capacity of 15,000 gallons per day (gpd) but is currently treating approximately 3000 gpd. Only one new hookup has been added since 1989.

