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League of Women Voters of Kitsap County, Washington
P.O. Box 1524
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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF KITSAP COUNTY
WASHINGTON

presents

KNOW YOUR COUNTY

Know Your County



SEAL OF KITSAP COUNTY

This publication is a handbook about Kitsap County government, special education and government service districts and selected non-profit organizations prepared by members of the League of Women Voters of Kitsap County, with assistance from county staff.

We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation given by elected county officials, department heads and staff members.

The League of Women Voters is a national nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active citizen participation in government.

*This is the seventh edition of **KNOW YOUR COUNTY**. Previous editions were published, as follows:*

<i>Edition 1966</i>	<i>Edition 1989</i>
<i>Edition 1973</i>	<i>Edition 1992</i>
<i>Edition 1983</i>	<i>Edition 2000</i>

Information contained in this pamphlet is intended to provide general guidance about county services and governing regulations in effect as of March 2005. Readers should seek the assistance of counsel for specific applications of law.

The Kitsap County seal, used with permission, was designed in 1969 by Burke Carstens, a former staff member of the County Assessor's Office. The seal is an adaptation of the design of an Indian ceremonial headdress and cloak.

MARCH 2005

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Captain George Vancouver, a British explorer, was the first white man to visit the Kitsap Peninsula. In 1792, he mapped and named many of the outstanding features of the Puget Sound area. An area slightly larger than the present state became the Territory of Washington on March 2, 1853. In 1855, as part of the Point Elliot Treaty, the Port Madison Indian Reservation was set aside for the Suquamish Tribe. A federal reserve for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe was created in 1934.



An early Kitsap County photo of roadway clearing

In 1857, at the urging of local sawmill owners, the Territorial Legislature created a new county from what was then western King and southern Jefferson counties. The county was originally called Slaughter County after Lieutenant William Alloway Slaughter, who had been killed in the Indian Wars of 1855-1856. After a public outcry, voters renamed the county through a general

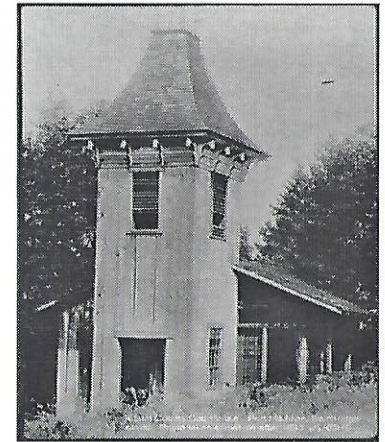
election held July 13, 1857. Kitsap, which according to local native legend means the *good and brave*, was the name chosen.

Lumber and shipbuilding industries dominated early northwest political, social and economic life in the 1850's and 1860's. During that time, Kitsap County was home to five of the largest lumber mills in the world, and boasted the wealthiest county per capita in the United States.

Mills were established at Port Madison and Port Blakely on Bainbridge Island, with a third notable mill established by Pope and Talbot in 1853 off-island on the northern edge tip of the county. Settlements were constructed by mill owners to accommodate the needs of workers and their families. These company-owned towns included nice homes, churches, schools, and stores with abundant supplies.

As a primary hub to mill activity, Port Madison on Bainbridge Island was selected by voters to be the first county seat, and George Meigs, owner of the Port Madison Mill, the first county commissioner.

In the years following the Civil War, Kitsap County enjoyed great prosperity and many new settlers came to the area. By 1884, Long Lake, Colby, Olalla, Poulsbo, Silverdale, Browns-ville, and Sydney were settled. Before its opening in 1891, rumors of the proposed Puget Sound Navy Yard generated a real estate boom along the Sinclair and Dyes Inlets and resulted in the platting and settlement of Tracyton, Chico, Manette Point, Charleston, and Bremerton. In 1893, residents, primarily farmers and small businessmen, relocated the county seat to Sydney (renamed Port Orchard in 1903).



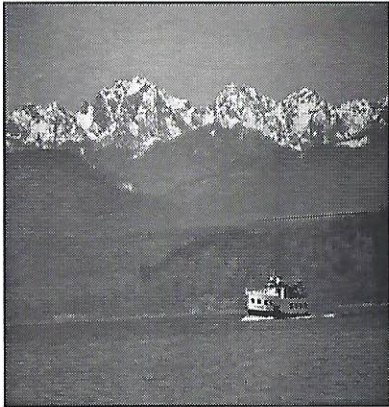
First county courthouse at Port Madison

In 1898, the federal government built Fort Ward on the south end of Bainbridge Island to protect the shipyard. They also acquired the property located across Rich Passage from Fort Ward to develop the Manchester Oil Depot. Over the years, military activity led to the development of the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (formerly the Keyport Naval Torpedo Station), Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Naval Base Kitsap (formerly Naval Station Bremerton and Naval Submarine Base Bangor).

Before the advent of cars and bridges, waterways were the area's first freeways. Many small ferries carrying passengers and a variety of freight plied the waters of Puget Sound and Hood Canal, earning the name *Mosquito Fleet*. The still operating Bremerton-Port Orchard-Annapolis foot ferries are a remnant of the Mosquito Fleet days.

GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

Kitsap County is located between the urban areas of Seattle and Tacoma and the wilderness of the Olympic Mountains. It is bounded by Hood Canal on the west, Admiralty Inlet on the north, Puget Sound on the east, and Mason and Pierce Counties to the south. Its land-mass totals 393 square miles, ranking thirty-sixth in area among Washington counties. Kitsap County has 228 miles of salt-water frontage —more than any other county in Washington. Most of the land area consists of remnants of a glacial drift plain.



Crystal Olympic Range mountain tops and sparkling Puget Sound wa-

The surface is composed generally of low rolling hills separated by valleys and bays. The land rises from sea level to maximum altitudes of 400 to 600 feet, except for the Green Mountain and Gold Mountain west of Bremerton. These hills, composed of volcanic rocks, cover about twenty square miles and rise to a maximum altitude of 1,761 feet.

KITSAP CITIES

- **City of Bremerton**, the most populated city in Kitsap County, is the site of the area's single largest employer, the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.
- **City of Port Orchard**, across Sinclair Inlet from Bremerton, is the county seat.
- **City of Poulsbo**, on the northern shore of Liberty Bay, is known as *Little Norway* because of its many residents of Norwegian descent.
- **City of Bainbridge Island** encompasses the entire island since 1990 when citizens voted to annex the unincorporated portions into the City of Winslow, then changed the city's name. Bainbridge Island is just minutes away from Seattle through one of the most heavily-traveled state ferry runs.

GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

URBAN COMMUNITIES

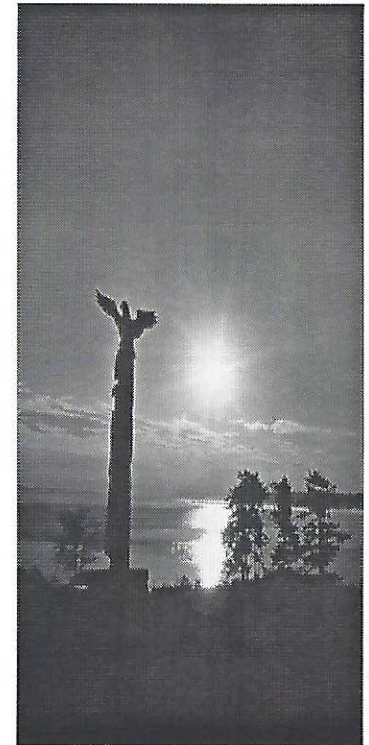
Aside from cities, there are numerous unincorporated communities in Kitsap County. One such community is **Port Gamble**, a former mill town, located on the shores of Hood Canal in North Kitsap. This picturesque community is restored as a national historic site to commemorate the northwest's age of lumber mills.

Moving south, the shore-side community of **Kingston** has experienced recent growing pains due to its convenient ferry link to Edmonds, making living and working in Kingston a great lifestyle option.

Continuing south, the **Suquamish Tribal** lands are home to the treasured *Old Man House*. This heritage site is thought to be the largest primitive wooden building built on the North American continent.

Keyport, south of Poulsbo, is home to small farms and to the Naval Undersea Warfare Center. In the center of the county, **Silverdale** serves as a major commercial driver for the area. This community is often assumed to be an incorporated city, but incorporation was last rejected in 1999.

On the southern end of Kitsap, **Manchester** and **Southworth** enjoy connection by ferry to Vashon Island and WestSeattle. **Olalla** meets the northern boundary of Pierce County and the City of Gig Harbor.

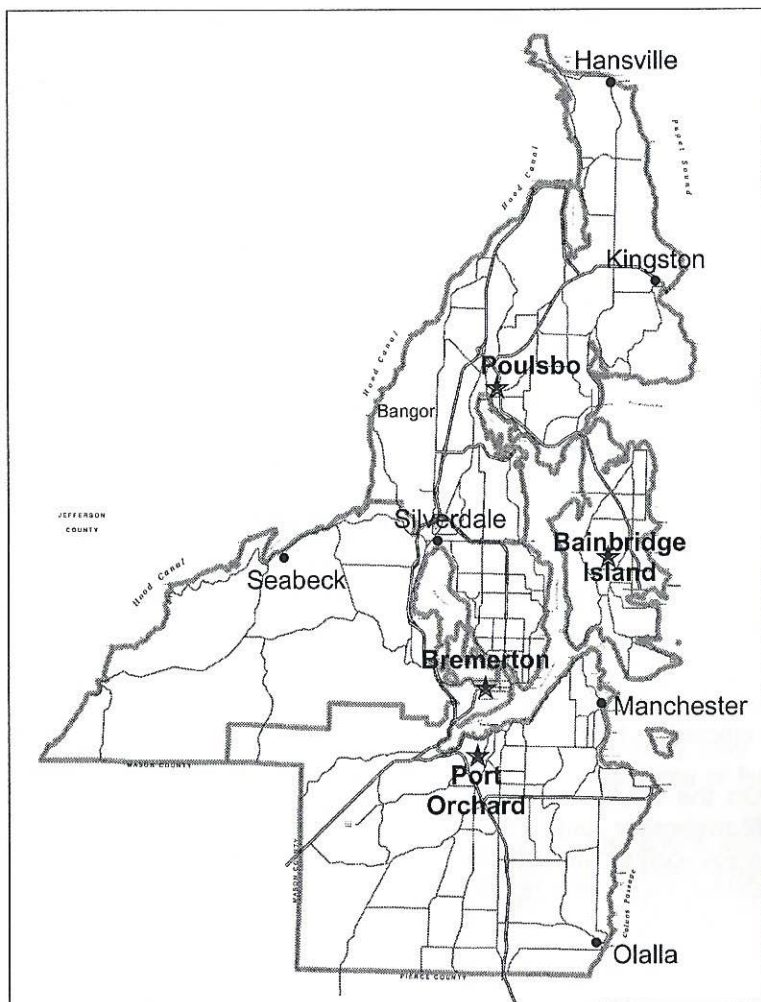


Marking Chief Seattle's grave, the mighty totem is silhouetted by the sunrise over Suquamish.
Source: Kitsap VCB

GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

Although the economy remains heavily dependent on various naval installations, Kitsap County shares in the population and economic growth occurring in the Puget Sound region. Estimates for 2002 rank the county sixth in population (234,700 residents) and second in population density (597 persons per square mile) behind only King County.

COUNTY MAP



COUNTY SUMMARY DATA

KITSAP COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Full-time	1,153
Part-Time	39
Total	1,192

Source: Kitsap County Personnel Office, 12/2004

COUNTY POPULATION

2000 Federal Census	231,969
2002 State OFM Population Estimate	234,700
Bainbridge Island	20,308
Bremerton	37,259
Port Orchard	7,693
Poulsbo	6,813

COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Female Residents	49.3%
Male Residents	50.7%
White Persons	84.3%
African American Persons	2.9%
American Indian and Alaskan Native Persons	1.6%
Asian Persons	4.4%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Persons	0.4%
Hispanic or Latino Persons	4.1%
Persons Reporting Other Race	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census

POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Kitsap County is divided by the federal government between the first and sixth congressional districts, by the state to include the twenty-third legislative district and parts of the twenty-sixth and thirty-fifth legislative districts, and by the county into three county commissioner districts, north, central and south.

Washington State has a permanent voter registration system. The county auditor serves as official registrar and appoints deputy registrars for all of Kitsap County. Citizens may register at city halls, libraries, public schools, most federal and state agencies including the Department of Licensing at the Kitsap County Auditor's Office, and at voter registration drives.

To become a registered voter a person must be a United States citizen, at least eighteen years old on or before the next election, a resident of the State of Washington, and not currently denied civil rights through judicial action. A person may register at any time. However, one must register at least thirty days prior to an election in order to vote at the polls for that election. A person may register to vote less than thirty days prior to an election by going in person to the Election Division of the Auditor's Office and agreeing to vote by absentee ballot for that election. Applications for absentee ballots and specific voting procedures for primary elections are available by contacting the Elections Division, or by visiting them online. No political party preference is declared when registering.

A voter who fails to vote for twenty-four months or in the most recent presidential election must re-register. Name changes for voter registration require written notice indicating the voter's former signature and new signature. Voters moving within Kitsap County submit the address change in writing. These changes may be made by mail or in person at the Elections Division of the Auditor's Office.

Persons wishing to file for office must do so with the county auditor and must be registered a voter in their district. Those filing for offices within split legislative districts or for congressional seats or state offices must file with the Secretary of State in Olympia. The filing period is Monday through Friday of during the last week of July. The filing fee is one-percent of the position's salary, if any.

Elections are held every year. Federal, state and county elections are held in even numbered years. Local and special district elections are held in odd numbered years.

Primary elections are held the third Tuesday in September. These elections determine which candidates shall appear on the general election ballot. General elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

State ballot measures may appear on the general election ballot. Special elections, such as school or municipal proposal elections, may be held at other specified times.

The current budget is available for citizens on the county web site, or can be obtained from the Department of Administrative Services on compact disc by calling 360-337-7150.

Also available through the Administrative Services is the publication *A Citizen's Guide to the Kitsap County Budget*.



A patriotic parade down Port Orchard's Bay Street in 1920.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

360-337-7146

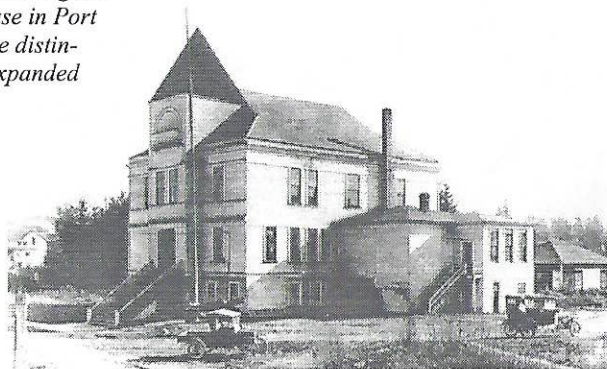
Kitsap County government adheres to the form and function of county government determined by the Washington State Constitution. The State Legislature may modify or amplify county authority and responsibility by enacting state law. Some counties perform their function under state home rule provisions contained within the state's twenty-first amendment. Home rule charter propositions were rejected in 1971 and again in 2001 by Kitsap voters.

Unlike Washington State government, no initiative or referendum process is authorized for county government. To present an issue to the board, citizens may request an item be taken up or may choose instead to present a petition to the board. By majority vote, the board can present any issue to voters by resolution.

The three member Board of Commissioners is responsible for the legislative and executive functions of county government, and has a quasi-judicial role in deciding land use matters. Board member candidates are nominated in the primary election on a partisan basis through a vote of their represented district; and run countywide in the general election.

Candidates must be registered voters and residents of the county district from which they run for office. Commissioners serve overlapping four-year terms. The Board sets salaries for succeeding commissioners.

The roof top of the original county courthouse in Port Orchard can be distinguished in the expanded building today.



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners are responsible for all administrative duties of running the county not expressly given to any other county position.

The Board's primary duties include:

- Adopting, amending and repealing county ordinances;
- Adopting biennial and supplemental budgets;
- Appointing advisors, boards and officials;
- Approving precinct and commissioner district boundaries;
- Conducting county business at public meetings;
- Approving land use plans;
- Managing county-owned properties;
- Setting salaries for most elected county officials (judges and the prosecutor salaries are established by the state); and
- Providing oversight of six departments (Administrative Services, Community Development, Information Services, Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Personnel and Human Services, and Public Works).

The Board of Commissioners usually holds a regular business meeting at 10 a.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at their Port Orchard chambers. At these open sessions, the Board holds hearings, sets policy and approves county business. Agendas are available in advance at the Commissioners' Office or online. At the end of business meetings, a time for public comment is provided.

American's with Disabilities Act

Special arrangements are made for persons with disabilities to assure they have access to participate in county government. Request special assistance by calling 360-337-7146.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

INTERGOVERNMENTAL BOARDS AND COUNCILS

Commissioners are county representatives on a number of intergovernmental policymaking boards, councils and authorities. In the case of regional intergovernmental bodies, commissioners generally appoint one or more of their number to serve as the county representative.

COUNTYWIDE BOARDS AND COUNCILS

Kitsap County Health District Board
Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority Board
Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council
Kitsap Transit Board
Central Communications Policy Board
Department of Emergency Management Policy Board
Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Disability Board

REGIONAL BOARDS AND COUNCILS

Central Puget Sound Economic Development District
Hood Canal Coordinating Council
Olympic Consortium Board
Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization
Peninsula Regional Support Network Executive Board
Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency
Timber Counties Committee
Puget Sound Regional Council
Executive Board
Transportation Policy Board
Growth Management Policy Board
Washington State Association of Counties:
Legislative Steering Committee
Urban County Caucus

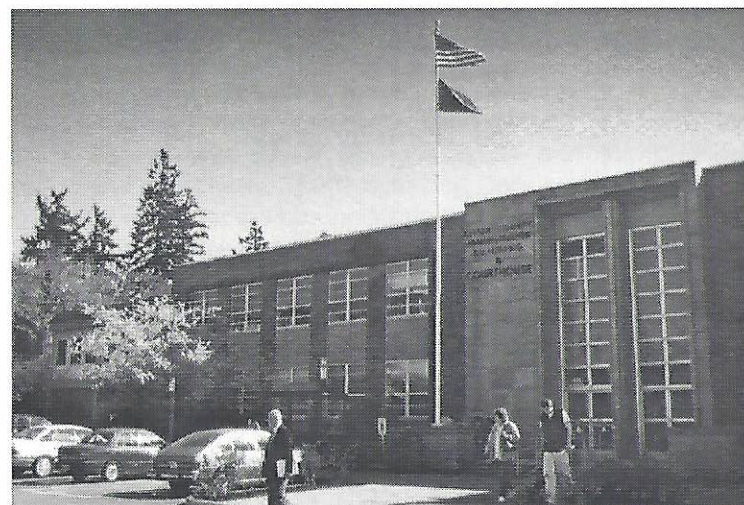
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

360-337-7146

The county administrator position was created in 1998 to provide administrative management support to the Board of Commissioners. The administrator is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and serves at-will to assist commissioners in carrying out their administrative responsibilities by:

- Implementing the direction of the Board
- Providing recommendations on policies, procedures and programs
- Monitoring the budget
- Negotiating contracts
- Developing solutions on a variety of administrative, fiscal and special project
- Providing direct oversight for appointed department directors and executive staff, which includes the public information officer and the administrative coordinator



Courthouse in Port Orchard, December 2004

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Clerk of the Board
360-337-4428

The Board of Commissioners appoints a clerk to serve on the executive staff as official record maker, and is responsible for:

- Scheduling and preparing agendas and records for board meetings, and filing them with the county auditor for archival purposes
- Preparing and publishing legal notices
- Receiving recommendations for hearing examiner and
- Planning Commission decision appeals

Public Information Officer
360-337-4481

In 2001, the Board of Commissioners established the executive staff position of public information officer to assure the public timely and accurate information about county governance and county issues. This officer is supervised by the county administrator and reports directly to the Board and county administrator, and is responsible for:

- Internal and external stakeholder communications
- Oversight of access television production and public access
- Public opinion measurement, including the semi-annual citizen survey
- Media relations and community outreach

Board of Equalization
360-337-4424

The Board of Commissioners appoints three to seven citizen volunteers to participate as members of a board of equalization. This board hears written and/or verbal taxpayer appeals on the county assessed valuations of real or personal property.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

360-337-7053

For efficiency, the County uses a biennial budget for process, beginning its fiscal year January 1. The budget process begins in spring with a revenue forecast. In July of even numbered years, the Department requests budget submittals for Board discussion in September and October. In November, a balanced budget, based on preliminary briefings is presented to the public. The Board holds public hearings to gather public input, and adopts the final budget by the last meeting of the year. In the odd numbered years, the Department reviews revenues and expenses to determine if the budget is on track and recommends a supplemental budget to the Board, if needed.

The director of the Department is appointed by the Board of Commissioners, and supervises four divisions.

The Budget and Finance Division analyzes and forecasts revenues and expenditures, and compiles and manages the biennial county budget.

The **Purchasing Division** makes acquisitions for the County and maintains vendor rosters for services and products. This list is shared with junior taxing districts and municipalities throughout the county. The Purchasing Division holds seminars to assure local companies understand how to list services and products for procurement.

The Risk Management Division is responsible for insurance procurement, loss control, claims handling, accident investigation, and contract review, and administers the workers' compensation program, the Employee Wellness program and participates in the Washington Counties Risk Pool.

The Volunteer Services Division works with departments, community groups, agencies, volunteer organizations, and citizens to facilitate involvement. A complete listing of current volunteer and intern positions are available on the Web site.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

360-337-7181

The director of this Department is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and oversees six divisions and fifty-seven staff members.

The **Building Division** conducts inspections to enforce the Uniform Building, Plumbing, Mechanical and Fire Codes, as well as the State Energy and Handicap Access Codes. Code enforcement investigates public land use, building, environmental and engineering complaints regarding code violations.

The **Fire Prevention Bureau** is responsible for fireworks permits, fire inspections and investigation and related matters.

The **Planning and Zoning Division** makes recommendations on the development and amendment of land use control documents and processes applications for building permits, rezones, and conditional use permits.

In unincorporated Kitsap County, **Building Permits** are required for the erection, inspection, enlargement, alteration, conversion to another use, or moving of buildings or structure, and the repair and maintenance of an existing structure, if such improvements exceed \$1,000 in value.

Permits must be posted and setback inspections requested *before* construction begins. Structures on property must conform to its zoning designation, setback requirements, limitations on area coverage, and Health Department requirements.



The County Fire Marshal works with all fire agencies to assure citizen safety in public and private structures.

Stop-work orders may be issued and other penalties assessed if the owner fails to apply for the proper permits and inspections. Depending on the project, other permits and inspections may be required. Property owners contemplating construction, platting or subdividing land are advised to check first with the department. Owners within incorporated cities should check with their respective planning offices.

The **Community Development Block Grants Division** administers funds for services to benefit low-income citizens in Kitsap County. This division is located at the new Norm Dicks Government Center in Bremerton.

The **Hearing Examiner** position, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, was established by county ordinance in 1981 to approve, grant with conditions or deny applications for:

- Conditional Use Permits
- Zoning Variances and Critical Areas Variances
- Site Plan Reviews
- Shoreline Substantial Development Permits
- Short Plat Appeals
- Appeals of Administrative Decisions (reversals or modifications of decisions issued by the Department in the administration or enforcement of regulations and codes)
- Performance Based Developments

The function of the examiner is quasi-judicial. Open-record hearings are conducted under formal procedures. Approximately fourteen days following the public hearing, the examiner renders a written decision. For all of the above applications (except plats), the examiner's decision is final, unless appealed to the Board.

Appeals to the Board can be filed by a party with standing in the matter if they believe the ruling is flawed by errors as a matter of fact or law. Written notice of appeal may be filed (within fourteen days) with the Clerk of the Board and the Department of Community Development. Appeals are considered at a closed-record hearing, after which commissioners may take final action.

Land Use in Kitsap County

Actions of the Board may be appealed (within twenty-one days) to Superior Court. A notice listing applications to be heard by The examiner and hearings to be held by the commissioners is published fifteen days in advance. The examiner conducts sessions on the second and fourth Thursdays each month. Commissioners meet on second and fourth Mondays.

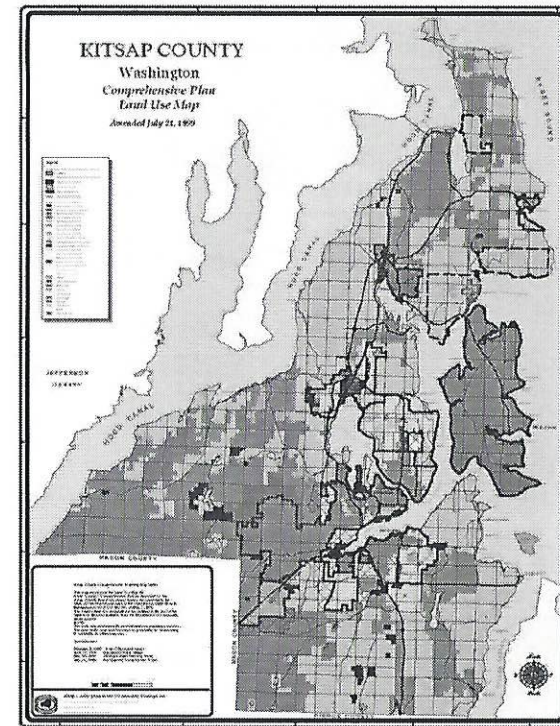
When law dictates or when this body "invokes jurisdiction," the **Boundary Review Board**, an independent board established by the state, holds public hearings to decide the appropriateness of boundaries in cases of annexation, incorporation or dissolution. The Board's five members are appointed for staggered six-year terms by the governor. Two members serve at-large and three are nominated by the county, cities and special districts.

To provide citizen feedback to the department, the county commissioners appoint nine volunteers as **Planning Commission advisors**, three from each commissioner district, to consider matters of overall and long-range planning. The Commission meets the last Tuesday of each month in an open public meeting. Recommendations of the commission are forwarded to the Board of Commissioners.

Each of the incorporated cities also has advisory planning bodies and staff for planning and development matters. The Suquamish Tribe, Kitsap County and the incorporated cities are members of the Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council, giving citizens a voice in the planning and development of the Puget Sound region.

The first regulation of land use in Kitsap County was a zoning ordinance adopted in 1948. There was no comprehensive plan or policy at that time. The first comprehensive land use plans were developed under the provisions of the County Planning Act, enacted by the state legislature in 1959.

Following the Navy's decision to base Trident submarines at Bangor, work began on plans to manage the expected growth.



The county's first GMA comprehensive land use map.

A new comprehensive land use plan was adopted in 1977. Refinements to this plan occurred in 1980 when the Bainbridge Island sub area plan was

adopted and in 1982 when the South Kitsap sub area plan was approved. In 1983, the Central and North Kitsap sub area plans were adopted as was a new countywide zoning ordinance.

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature developed and adopted the Growth Management Act, a state-controlled land-use regulation to address comprehensive land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities and services, natural environment, and economic development planning and to require cities and counties to work collaboratively.

In accordance with state law, the Board of Commissioners adopted a Comprehensive Plan for Kitsap County in 1994, but it was declared invalid by the state in 1996. A new plan, spelling out the general policies and goals for Kitsap County land use, was implemented and validated in 1999. Work continues each year to further refine the plan and add new sub area land use information.

FACILITIES, PARKS AND RECREATION

360-337-5350

The Department of Facilities, Parks and Recreation director is appointed by the Board of Commissioners, and oversees the acquisition, development, management and maintenance of park lands and recreational facilities, and ensures that public recreation programs, special events and the annual county fair are available to county residents.

The **Facilities Maintenance Division** merged with Parks and Recreation in 2002 to streamline the managing, operating and maintaining of more than seventy-three parks and open space areas, as well as the county fairgrounds, the Pavilion, the courthouse and all other county buildings.

Developed county parks and undeveloped open space areas are available to the public, all for day use only. In 2002, the department has begun to develop a system of large regional



“heritage” parks. The Department also offers recreation and cultural programs each year and operates five community centers that serve as venues for a variety of recreational and educational programs, and provide, for fee, multi-purpose rooms for use by the public.

Centers are located in Kingston, Island Lake County Park, Silverdale, Port Orchard (Givens) and Long Lake County Park.

Park volunteers work on trail maintenance.



The annual Kitsap County Fair and Stampede attracts thousands of visitors each year in August.

The Department offers recreational and cultural programs and operates five community centers that serve as venues for a variety of programs and provide multi-purpose rooms for use by the public for a fee. Centers are located in Kingston, Island Lake County Park, Silverdale, Port Orchard (Givens) and Long Lake County Park.

Added in 2004, the Department created an athletic program in the newly remodeled Pavilion (East Bremerton) with funding acquired from the Kitsap Public Facilities District. Tournament-quality ballfields were also added at Fairground using these resources to turn the Fairgrounds, once utilized infrequently and seasonally, into a year-round sports complex and field house.

The Department works with dozens of community groups and non-profit partners and volunteers to coordinate special events and park improvement projects.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

360-337-5555

The Department of Information Services was established as a department in 2004 after being separated from the Department of Administrative Services where it was first started to support the financial service needs of the budget group.

The Department director is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and directs its five divisions:

Application Services, Technical Services, Telecommunications, Geographic Information Systems, and Data Base Administration.

Since the group was first established as a Division in the mid-1970's, information technology services have become a significant resource for all branches of county government, providing computer systems and voice/data network infrastructure, as



The county land information system is now being marketed to other counties.

well as select portions city systems and technology support for various other local government agencies.

Because of the emerging role of technology in all areas of government, department representatives are needed at the strategic level of county government.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

PERSONNEL AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The director of the Department is appointed by the Board of Commissioners. Along with other duties, he serves as the chief examiner for the Sheriff's Civil Service Commission. This Department consists of two divisions and has ninety-one staff positions.

The **Personnel Division** assists county offices in acquiring and retaining a skilled workforce. The staff provides services related to staff recruitment and selection, employee benefits, records and information management, classification and compensation research, negotiation and administration of labor contracts, and tracks compliance with applicable state and federal laws, including equal employment opportunity regulations. All county employment opportunities are posted online or by calling a 24-hour job hotline 360 - 337-7169.

The **Human Services Division** responsibilities include planning and grant development and the administration of programs related to developmental disabilities, substance abuse treatment and prevention, mental health, aging and long-term care, human rights, children and youth, and job training and employment. This division also operates the Kitsap Recovery Center, a substance abuse treatment facility.

A significant component of Human Services is the **Division of Aging and Long Term Care**. The division, also known as the *Area Agency on Aging*, is responsible for planning, coordinating and delivering comprehensive services to enable aging citizens and people needing long-term care to live with as much dignity and independence as is possible. Services provided through contracts with local agencies include health maintenance and information, legal assistance, group and home-delivered meals, respite care, mental health counseling, substance abuse recovery support, in-home personal household care and assistance with daily living activities, telephone assistance/friendly visitor, and senior community services employment.

The Division also sponsors the **Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman** program that receives, investigates and resolves complaints from residents of long-term care facilities. Services are provided to functionally disabled individuals age eighteen or older receiving subsidized in-home care, adults in residential care and persons sixty years of age and older and their caregivers are eligible for services.

Annually, direct services are provided by the division to approximately 2,700 individuals, and 3,200 are served by contracting agencies. More than 1,780 are served by the Ombudsman pro-



gram, an additional 7,000 people obtain information and referrals annually. Revenue is received from state and federal grants and contracts administered by the division. Funding sources include the federal Older Americans Act, Social Security Act (Medicaid), Social Services Block Grant, the Washington State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and Senior Citizens Services Act.

In addition, the department provides staff support for nine citizen advisory boards and two executive boards, which were established by the Board of County Commissioners to meet legal mandates and address specific community needs. These groups include the **Human Rights Council** and the **Commission on Children and Youth**.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

360-337-5777



The county engineer, appointed by the Board of Commissioners, oversees the three divisions and approximately 240 employees that comprise this Department. Funds to operate its programs are fee and grants. Engineering and Roads Division operations are financed primarily by state gasoline and local road tax revenues collected as part of property tax.

Roads Division handles repair and maintenance of county roads, which include highways outside the limits of incorporated cities, except state highways. The Division includes **Engineering Services** and **Traffic Planning Services**.

The **Utilities Division**, financed solely by fees, is responsible for planning, operation and maintenance of wastewater, solid waste and surface and storm water utilities and the operation of four sewage collection and treatment facilities serving Kingston, Suquamish, Manchester and Central Kitsap. The **Surface Storm Water Management Operation** plans for and maintains surface water management systems.

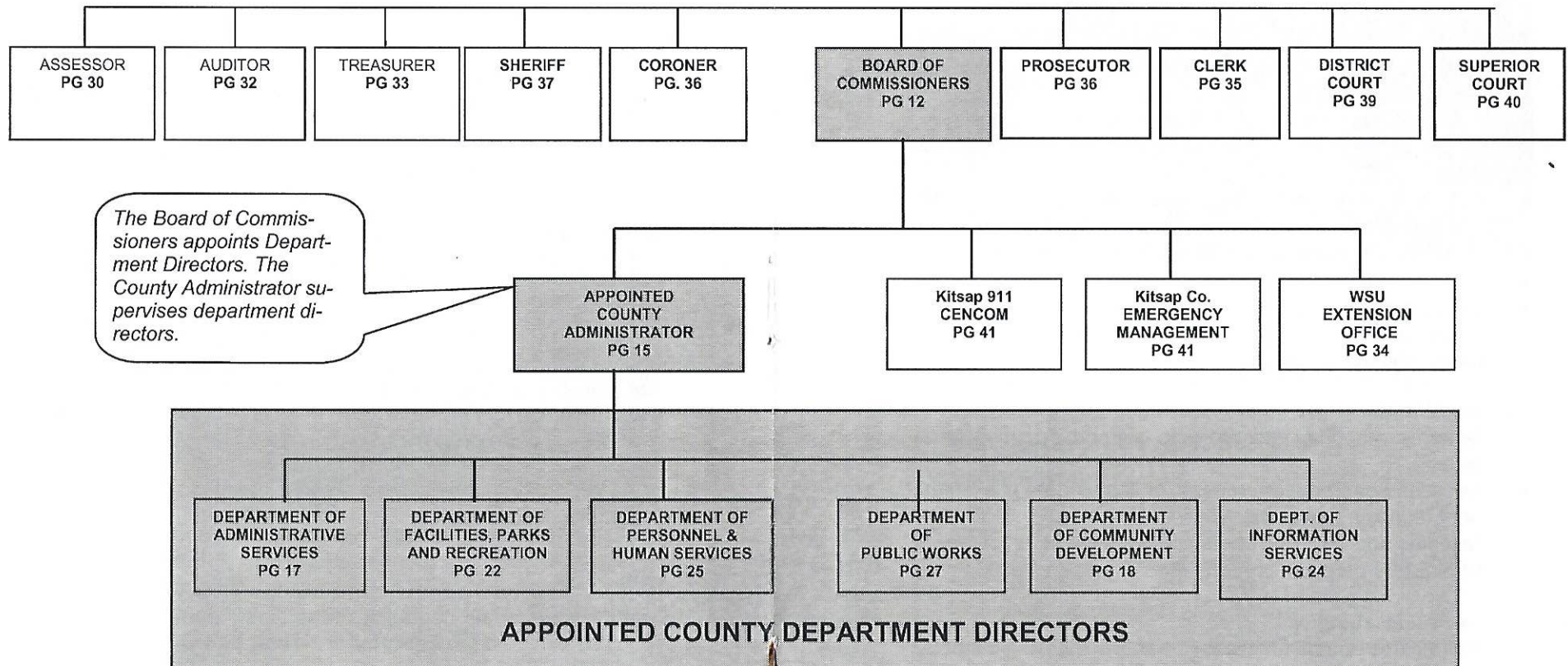
The **Solid Waste Division** is responsible for solid waste management, including recycling, waste collection, transportation and disposal oversight. The Division also manages the county Moderate Risk Waste Collection Facility.

Support Services provide administrative help for the Department, including the operation of the Open Line customer support program and the **Equipment Rental and Revolving Fund** program.

The program manager also serves as purchasing coordinator for Public Works, managing the ownership all county vehicles and equipment. As part of this work, fleet vehicles are rented to various departments for a fee that covers the administration of the fund, equipment maintenance and fund reserves for eventual replacement of the vehicles in accordance with state law.

KITSAP COUNTY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

**KITSAP
CITIZENS**



360-337-7160

The assessor is elected on a partisan basis by countywide ballot to serve a four-year term. Law requires the assessor to distribute the property tax burden proportionately to property owners. This is done by equitably assessing property value, setting individual taxing district levy rates based on value, administering tax relief (exemption) programs, and maintaining assessment records for public access. The Assessor's Office is organized into four functional divisions with a staff of thirty-three, eighteen of which are appraisers.

Residential and Commercial Appraisal Divisions and the Special Use Division

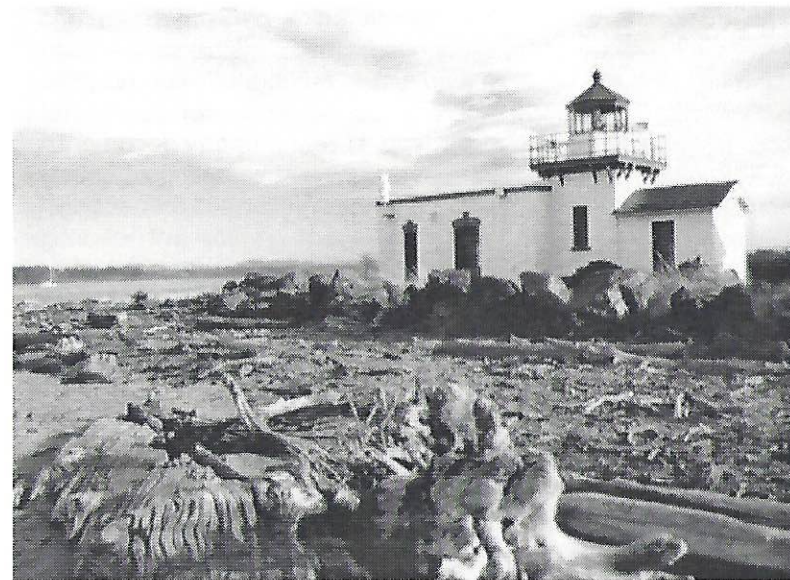
- Values all property on an annual basis and physically inspects all residential properties at least once every six years;
- Adds new construction and removes destroyed property from tax rolls; and
- Administers the residential remodel exemption program;
- Defends valuation appeals; and
- Administers the "Current Use" exemption program, including special assessments on forest and timber land, open space, and agriculture uses.

Cadastral Division

- Performs mapping necessary to support appraisal processes
- Processes segregation, merger and boundary line adjustment requests that request new accounts
- Validates and verifies ownership transfers (sales)
- Administers personal property reporting and valuation

Assessment Administration Division

- Coordinates annual levy requirements with taxing districts
- Publishes an annual *Statement of Assessments*
- Performs tax roll annual maintenance and closures
- Administers senior and disabled exemption programs
- Processes personal property listing reports
- Enters new construction plans into the appraisal system



Point No Point, Hansville in North Kitsap

Tax Relief Programs Administrated by the Assessor's Office

- Open space land
- Agricultural land
- Timber land
- Designated forest land
- Destroyed property
- Non-profit organization exemptions
- Senior and disabled persons exemption programs and tax deferral
- Residential improvement exemptions

COUNTY AUDITOR

360-337-7129

The auditor is elected countywide on a partisan basis and serves a four-year term. The auditor is responsible for conducting elections and maintaining voter registration records, the issuance of vehicle, vessel and marriage licenses for the recording, maintenance and retrieval of real property documents, deeds and titles, and for the oversight and reporting of county accounting activities. The Office of the Auditor has four subdivisions and a staff of thirty-four.

The **Election and Voter Registration Division** administers federal, state, county, municipal, and special purpose district elections in Kitsap County. It maintains voter registration records, publishes *Voters' Pamphlets*, voter outreach programs, accepts candidate-filings for local offices, and maintains historical records of past elections. The office publishes candidate information through the Public Disclosure Commission; forms are online.



Kitsap County courthouse, 1910.

The Recording and Marriage License Division issues and maintains marriage licenses and various local business licenses, official public records, including deeds, titles, and archives commissioner records and historical county documents dating back to 1857.

The Vehicle and Vessel Licensing Division acts as the county agent for the Washington State Department of Licensing by issuing licenses, tabs, special issue license plates, and disabled parking permits. They process title transfer applications, issue pet licenses for unincorporated areas of Kitsap County, and record and receive gambling taxes.

The **Financial Management Division** maintains the central accounting system and is responsible for controlling and issuing disbursements, financial accounting and reporting, grant accounting, payroll and fixed-asset inventory. This division also prepares and publishes the *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*.

COUNTY TREASURER

360-337-7135

The treasurer is elected countywide on a partisan basis and serves a four-year term.

The county treasurer is the chief financial and fiduciary agent for the county, the ex-officio treasurer for most local governmental subdivisions and the ex-officio tax collector for incorporated cities in Kitsap County. The Office of the Treasurer, with a staff of thirteen, is responsible for:

- Accounting for cash receipts, transfers and disbursements
- Billing, collecting and distributing taxes, special assessments and fees;
- Contracting and managing banking and credit card relationships
- Foreclosing and distraining property for nonpayment of real and personal property and special assessments
- Making payments and maintaining a register of debt issuance
- Managing local government investment pool for residual cash balances
- Receiving, receipting and distributing cash assets
- Selling at auction county surplus property



Illehee Forest, Bremerton is one of several forest preserves owned by Kitsap County.

COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

360-337-7157



Water Wise Garden at Givens Community Center, Port Orchard

Formerly *Cooperative* Extension, the Kitsap County Extension program is a partnership between Washington State University, the county and local citizens. Extension employees relocated to the Bremerton-based Norm Dicks Government Center, in the fall of 2004.

This educational service is funded in three ways: it receives federal funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state funding through Washington State University and local funding through Kitsap County government. The Extension brings research-based knowledge to community residents through programs that train volunteers to pass on their knowledge to others.

Topics are determined based on input from the community. Current educational programs are offered for youth and adults in horticulture, small farm development, natural resources, nutrition, food safety, clothing and textiles, and agriculture and youth development.

Other familiar Extension programs include 4H, Master Gardeners and Sea Grant. See further detail on this program by visiting www.kitsap.wsu.edu.

LAW AND JUSTICE SERVICES

The State Constitution mandates the election of a county clerk, corner, prosecuting attorney, and sheriff, each elected at-large by all county voters on a partisan basis to serve a four-year-term. The Board of Commissioners establishes salaries and approves budgets for all three offices.

COUNTY CLERK

360-337-7164

The county clerk is elected at-large by county voters on a partisan basis and serves a four-year term as the administrative and financial officer of county Superior Court. The Clerk's duties and roles follow:

- Receiving, processing and preserving documents and records;
- Collecting, accounting, investing, and disbursing court revenues;
- Issuing writs, subpoenas and court orders;
- Assisting with and screening of petitions for domestic violence and anti-harassment protection orders;
- Serving as **Jury Commissioner** by administering the juror selection process for all Superior, District, and Municipal Courts in the county;
- Accepting and processing passport applications;
- Providing a **Courthouse Facilitator** for persons representing themselves pro se (without an attorney) in domestic court proceedings; and
- Assigning public defenders for indigent persons facing criminal prosecution or involuntary commitment.

LAW AND JUSTICE SERVICES

COUNTY CORONER

360-337-7077

The coroner is elected at-large by county voters on a partisan basis and serves a four-year term. The major responsibility of the coroner is the investigation of death when individuals die without medical oversight. Examples of such cases involve accidents, homicides and suicides. An inquest may be held if the coroner suspects the death was unnatural, violent, resulting from unlawful means, or if death occurred under suspicious circumstances.

Coroner investigations are handled independently of fire or law enforcement investigations. The coroner can issue warrants for the arrest of a suspect when death is thought to be the result of homicide.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

360-337-7174

The prosecuting attorney is elected at-large by county voters on a partisan basis and serves a four-year term. This office is responsible for the prosecution of all felony, misdemeanor and traffic cases throughout Kitsap County and, provides prosecution, under negotiated contract, for all four Kitsap cities. The prosecuting attorney and deputy prosecutors are members of the Washington State Bar in good standing.

The Criminal Division is separated into specialized units. They are special crimes and fraud, sexual assault and child abuse, drug enforcement, property crime, and violent crime. Their work involves all aspects of cases from charging through conviction. **The Civil Division** serves as legal counsel for Kitsap County elected officials, department directors and county agencies. This division responds to legal questions by issuing written opinions, providing general day-to-day legal advice and handling civil litigation on behalf of various branches of county government. Part of their responsibility is to act as legal counsel and chief clerk to the **Boundary Review Board**, a state mandated board that reviews proposed changes in boundaries as submitted by cities and special purpose districts.

LAW AND JUSTICE SERVICES



Kitsap County Sheriff's Deputies on traffic patrol.

COUNTY SHERIFF

360-337-7101

Sheriff's personnel fall under civil service jurisdiction, administered by a three member Civil Service commission. There are 121 sworn deputies, ninety-nine commissioned corrections officers and thirty-two support personnel with a total budget of more than \$21 million per year.

Responsibilities include:

- Responding to emergency calls for service
- Investigating crimes and examining crime scenes
- Arresting and detaining suspects
- Providing traffic enforcement, collision investigation
- Providing a marine patrol
- Establishing and operating the Kitsap County Correctional Center
- Coordinating search and rescue missions
- Maintaining records and serving civil papers issued by the courts
- Public safety education
- Principal lead agency for a multi-jurisdictional drug task unit

Citizens may file reports, obtain concealed pistol licenses and be interviewed at:

- County Courthouse in Port Orchard
- Silverdale Precinct, 3951 Randall Way
- Kingston Precinct, State Highway 104

COUNTY COURTS

The State Constitution establishes the court system and the Washington State Legislature determines the number of judges serving in each jurisdiction. An independent salary commission sets salary levels for judges. Salaries for Superior Court judges are paid half by the state and half by the county. District Court judges are paid from county funds only. A judge must be a qualified voter, a member of the Washington State Bar and may not practice law or hold another public office during his or her term. The Commission on Judicial Conduct may review a judge's performance while in office.

JUROR INFORMATION

The county clerk summons prospective jurors, randomly selected from a combined list of Kitsap County registered voters and licensed drivers, to serve in Superior, District, and Municipal Courts.

State Law (RCW 2.36.070) sets forth the legal qualifications for prospective jurors. They must be at least eighteen years of age, a citizen of the United States, a resident of the county or municipality in which one is summoned to serve, able to communicate in the English language, and free of felony convictions.

A juror may only be excused from jury service for reasons deemed sufficient by the court. Unless excused, citizens summoned for jury duty are required to call in during a stated one-week period and to report to the court, if selected.

In Kitsap County, the term of jury service is one trial or one day. Jurors are paid a daily stipend and reimbursed for mileage.

DISTRICT COURT

360-337-7109

Washington State authorizes four district courts in Kitsap County. Four district judges are elected at-large countywide on a non-partisan basis and serve a four year term. Like Superior Court, District Court judges may appoint Court Commissioners to hear non-criminal matters. Courts are located in the county courthouse and at satellite locations in Poulsbo and Silverdale. Anyone needing special accommodation to access the District Court may contact the court in advance for assistance at 360-337-7109.

The **Civil Division** hears civil cases up to the jurisdictional limit of \$35,000 and *small claims* cases up to a claimed amount of \$2,500. In addition, the court hears unlawful harassment petitions brought against adults and requests for name changes.

The **Criminal Division** has jurisdiction over misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor crimes that carry a maximum penalty of one year in jail and/or a \$5,000 fine. These include criminal traffic matters (i.e., driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, driving while license suspended, etc.) and non-traffic criminal matters (i.e., assault, domestic violence charges, theft, trespass, etc.). The court also handles traffic infractions (i.e., speeding, license tab charges, insurance and equipment violations, etc.). Infractions and criminal charges may be filed by the Washington State Patrol, the Kitsap County Sheriff or Prosecutor, the Department of Wildlife or Natural Resources, the Kitsap County Humane Society, State and County Parks Departments, the Liquor Control Board, the Kitsap County Community Development Department, and the Kitsap Health District.

The **Probation Services Division** supervises defendants sentenced by the court, monitoring defendant compliance with conditions of sentence or pretrial release set by the court.

Municipal Courts hear cases originating by a violation of city ordinances or which are committed inside city boundaries. Tribes have their own courts to handle violations that occur on reservations. U.S. District Courts hear cases involving violation of federal law on a federal installation.

SUPERIOR COURT

360-337-7140

Superior Court Judges are elected at-large by county voters on a non-partisan basis and serve a four-year term. Kitsap County Superior Court is presided over by seven full-time judges who act as an arm of the judicial branch of Washington State.

Superior Court bears the responsibility of adjudicating all matters coming before it over which it has unlimited original or appellate jurisdiction pursuant to the Washington State Constitution. This includes responsibility for criminal felony, civil, juvenile, domestic relations, adoption, guardianship, paternity, probate, domestic violence, and mental illness cases.

Decisions of the Superior Court may be appealed to the State Court of Appeals and/or the Supreme Court. Judges may appoint **Court Commissioners** to act as judges, who may hear all types of cases except criminal cases.

Juvenile Court and Detention Center

In addition to these responsibilities, Superior Court judges are responsible for the operation of the Juvenile Court. They appoint the director for the **Juvenile Detention Facility**.

The director has the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of probation and detention services for juvenile offenders, and for handling cases of dependent children. They may also assist in child custody cases arising from dissolution of marriage.

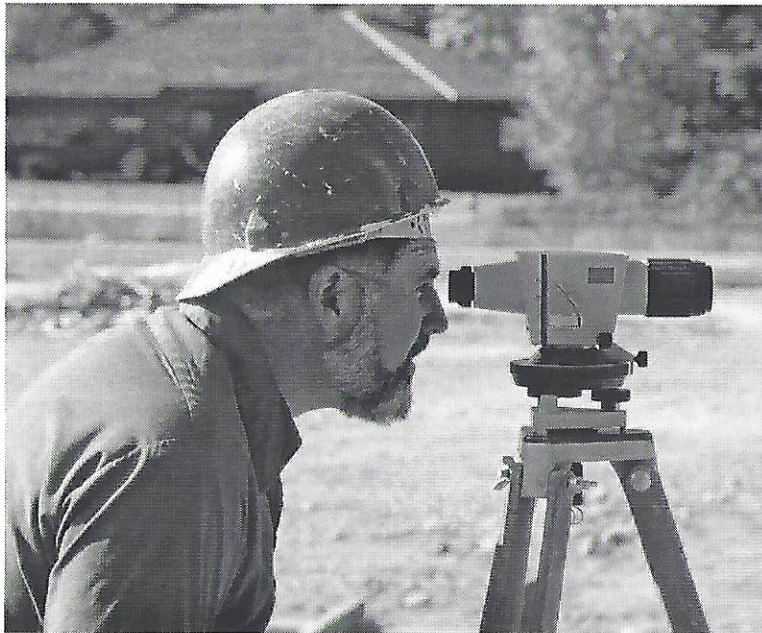
The **Diversion Program** uses case managers to work with young offenders. Depending on the situation, a case manager may send minor, first-time offenders before a volunteer citizen panel to be sanctioned or other to receive some other form of sentencing.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Special districts are allowed by state law which specifies function, organization and revenue raising authority. There are many types of special districts in Kitsap County, including four fire protection districts, ten water districts, two sewer districts, twelve port districts, three parks districts, one public health district, one public facilities district, one public utility district, one library district, and one transportation district. Most of these districts encompass a limited geographical or service area. However, the boundaries of the health, library, transportation and public utility districts coincide with those of the county and include incorporated cities.



Court Clerk's Office on filing day.



Kitsap Public Utility District #1
800-739-6766 • www.kpud.org

The **Kitsap Public Utility District (KPUD)** is a municipal corporation with the same incorporated boundaries as the entire Kitsap County. Funded by customer water fees and property taxes, three elected commissioners govern KPUD, with one commissioner from each county district elected on a nonpartisan basis for a six-year, overlapping term. KPUD offices are located in Poulsbo.

KPUD owns and operates thirty-six water supply systems through out Kitsap County. KPUD and Kitsap County have agreed that the District is to provide technical, managerial and financial operational and support services to assist and assure the provision of sound water resource development, protection and utility service. The District also conducts water related education programs for people ranging from grade school age to adult learners.

Kitsap County Health District
360-337-5235 • www.kitsapcountyhealth.com

The Kitsap County Health District is a special district working to protect and promote the health of county residents by preventing and controlling disease, injury, disability, and premature death.

The district is governed by a local board of health, which is composed of the three county commissioners, the mayors of Kitsap's four cities, two Bremerton city council members, and one City of Bainbridge Island council member.

In 2005, it relocated to the Bremerton Government Center. By state law, the board appoints a health officer, who must be a licensed physician with training in public health, to be responsible for local public health functions, public health policy development and assuring health service delivery.

The district provides disease prevention, family planning and health promotion services to individuals, families and the population at large. These services are provided in health district clinics, home visits, schools, and a variety of other community settings. Environmental health services are also provided addressing drinking water, on-site sewage, solid and hazardous waste, environmental water quality, and food safety.

The Health District operates two satellite clinics.

In the north end of the county, the **Poulsbo Clinic** (the former county annex) is located at 19540 Front Street NE and operates two days a week, Monday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. They can be reached during these hours at 360-337-5247.

A second clinic location is located in the **Givens Community Center** Clinic in Port Orchard. District clinicians are onsite Tuesday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. They can be reached at 360-337-5720.

NON-COUNTY AGENCIES

Kitsap Regional Library 360-405-9100 • www.krl.org

The Kitsap Regional Library system is administered by a Board of Trustees whose five members are appointed for five-year terms by the County Board of Commissioners. Trustees must be qualified voters and may not serve more than two full consecutive terms. Nine branches (East Bremerton, Bainbridge, downtown Bremerton, Kingston, Little Boston, Manchester, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, and Silverdale) comprise the Regional Library, with the E. Brem. Branch serving as the administrative headquarters. The library operates a bookmobile and an outreach service for those who are homebound. Computers access electronic mail and the Internet at all the branches. In turn, library services can be accessed remotely through the Internet. In addition, each library is equipped with wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) for patrons with portable computers (PCd) or personal digital assistants (PDAs). There are also a variety of reading programs at the branches for both children and adults. To obtain a library card go to your local library or online.

Kitsap Transit 360-479-6962 • www.kitsaptransit.org

Officially named Kitsap County Public Transportation Benefit Area Authority, this transportation system was established by voters in 1982 to provide public transportation services in the greater Bremerton and Port Orchard area and in portions of the county. The governing board is comprised of the county commissioners, mayors of the four incorporated cities and two Bremerton council members. An appointed executive director oversees the operation of Kitsap Transit. The transit authority is funded by sales tax, grants and fees. Since its formation, Kitsap Transit's benefit area has expanded to include all of Kitsap County. It now operates multiple programs, including regular public transit routes, a transportation service for elderly and disabled persons, a rideshare program and passenger ferry operations through a contract with the private sector.

NON-COUNTY AGENCIES

COUNTYWIDE COALITIONS

Central Communications 360-307-5800 • www.kitsap911.org

Central Communications (CENCOM) is the 9-1-1 emergency response dispatch center for Kitsap law enforcement, fire and medical emergency services. For enhanced service, the agency operates a countywide enhanced 911 telephone system to provide a faster response based on caller location.

Emergency Management 360-307-5870 • www.kitsapdem.org

The Emergency Management is responsible for preparedness planning for any emergency effecting Kitsap County and designated as the coordinating agency for the Federal Department of Homeland Security. An appointed director serves at the pleasure of its policy board, which is comprised of elected and appointed officials similar to CENCOM.



The Kitsap County Readiness Center, dedicated in 2004, houses the Department of Emergency Management and CENCOM 911.

COUNTYWIDE COALITIONS

Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council 360-377-4900

The Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council is one of the longest standing examples of coalition governance. Established in 1991 to carry out multi-jurisdictional planning as per the State's Growth Management Act, the KRCC broadened its mission, to include cooperative action on a wider range of issues facing Kitsap County and federal transportation legislation in 1997. The council of governments includes Kitsap County, the Cities of Bremerton, Bainbridge Island, Port Orchard, and Poulsbo, and the Suquamish and Port Gamble/S'Klallam Tribes. The KRCC is now responsible for Kitsap Countywide Planning Policies; for allocating federal transportation funding and Community Development Block Grant funding; for information sharing and collaborative action on a wide range of regional issues.

Kitsap Public Facilities District 360-337-5356 www.kitsapgov.com/boards/pfd.htm

The Kitsap Public Facilities District is a municipal corporation founded by the Board of County Commissioners in June 2000 to build, improve and operate sports, entertainment and conference facilities. Funding comes through a non-voted sales tax rebate from the state, fees, and private donations, as well as voter-approved sales tax (none currently authorized). It is governed by a seven member Board of Directors appointed by the County Commissioners for four year, renewable terms.



Kitsap Consolidated Housing Authority is the agency that developed the Norm Dicks Government Center in Bremerton (2004) and the Waterfront Market Condominium project in (2005).

Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority 360-535-6100 • www.kccha.com

The Kitsap County Consolidated Housing Authority is a coalition of local government agencies that builds affordable housing for families, the disabled, and seniors in the Kitsap community, and has recently added economic redevelopment for cities and their communities to their core mission. Funds for this work come from private investors, as well as state and federal grants - not from local taxes.

NON-PROFIT AGENCIES PROVIDING GOVERN-

Kitsap Mental Health Services

360-373-5031 • www.kitsapmentalhealth.org

Kitsap Mental Health Services is a private, not for profit community center providing mental health and behavioral health care services to children, families, adults, and seniors. Serving Kitsap County since 1978, It offers a comprehensive array of inpatient and outpatient programs with individualized and tailored care provided to individuals affected by mental illness. The agency also operates the Crisis Clinic phone line, and is contracted by the County to provide 24-hour crisis intervention and evaluation services.

Kitsap Humane Society

(360) 692-6977 • www.kitsaphumane.org

The county and cities contract with Kitsap Humane Society (KHS), a nonprofit organization, to enforce certain state laws and local ordinances. KHS handles animals at large, rescues animals in distress, and operates a shelter and quarantine (in case of bites). **Kitsap Animal Control** is a division of KHS. Operating funds come from contracts for service, donations, adoption of animals, service charges, and impound fees. Animal Control Officers are deputized as special police and special sheriff's deputies.

EDUCATION

State law largely determines the operation of local school districts. Article IX of the Washington Constitution declares "it is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex." There are five K-12 school districts within the boundaries of Kitsap County. They are **Bainbridge Island, North Kitsap, Central Kitsap, Bremerton and South Kitsap School Districts**.

Each district has a five-member board of directors, who are elected in November of the odd-numbered years by voters residing inside district boundaries. Directors serve four-year, overlapping terms. Board meetings are open to the public and are held regular reoccurring times and places. School districts are funded from various sources including state revenues, apportioned by a formula that takes into account enrollment, basic education, vocational and handicapped education programs, and pupil transportation.

All five school districts receive federal impact funds and may also receive federal funds for specific educational programs or purposes. With the approval of the voters, a school district may assess local property tax for construction (bond levies) and, within certain limits, for operation and maintenance (special levies).

NON-COUNTY AGENCIES

West Sound Technical Institute
360-478-5083

The Center, located on National Avenue in West Bremerton, opened in 1978 as a cooperative venture of the Bremerton, North, South and Central Kitsap, Bainbridge Island, North Mason (Mason County) and Peninsula (Pierce County) school districts. Five hundred high school juniors and seniors from participating districts attend half school days. Enrollment is by application and class sizes are limited. The Center provides occupational training in a number of different fields. Students also have an opportunity to earn college credits through Olympic College and Highline Community College.

Educational Service District (ESD)

ESD 114 provides a link between the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and local school districts. They are governed by a board elected by the directors of member districts, and are funded primarily by state appropriations. ESD 114, located in Bremerton, serves school districts on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas, providing services and technical assistance.

Olympic Community College
800-259-6718 • www.oc.ctc.edu

Olympic College is a public, state supported, two-year post-secondary institution. The college offers an Associate of Arts and Sciences degree, an Associate of Technical Arts degree, Professional Technical Certificates, Adult High School Diplomas (GED), and cooperative education and Running Start programs. It also provides partnerships for Bachelor Degrees with Western Washington University, Old Dominion University and St Martin's College. At present, the college offers classes and programs at Olympic College and sites in Poulsbo, Bremerton and Shelton. The college is governed by a five-member board of trustees, appointed by the governor, and is funded primarily by state appropriations and student tuition.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

The Open Public Meetings Act (CH 42.30 RCW) is based on the concept that the public's business must be conducted in the open. Meetings of public government bodies must be open to the public, although not necessarily for public comment or debate. Except for the courts and the legislature, meetings of all governing bodies of state and local agencies and their sub-agencies are subject to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. "Governing bodies" include a committee of a council or other governing body "when the committee acts on behalf of the governing body, conducts hearings or takes testimony or public comment" (RCW 42.30.020 as amended by Ch 155, Laws of 1983). Ordinances, rules, resolutions, regulations, orders, or directives adopted in violation of the Act are invalid. A member of the governing body who knowingly participates in violating the act is subject to a civil penalty. Failure to comply with the Open Public Meetings Act may also result in removal from office.

Closed Sessions

In general, *executive* (closed) sessions may be held only to consider matters affecting national security, site selection or acquisition, complaints, charges or qualifications of certain personnel, and pending or potential litigation. Final action on matters considered in executive session must be made in a meeting open to the public.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

The Freedom of Information Act (RCW 42.17) deals with the right of all citizens to inspect and/or copy public records. Exceptions include records containing certain personal information. Citizens may examine and copy, for example, property tax records, council minutes, budgets, reports, maps, and correspondence. Agencies are required to make their records available "promptly" on request, and must give written reasons for denials of access or copies. A modest per page copying fee is permitted. Remedies for denial of public access to public information are prescribed in law. Requests invoking the Act should be filed with the Department of Administrative Services at 360-337-4410.

OPTIONS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There are many ways in which interested citizens can become engaged in local government:

- Vote
- Run for public office (see ELECTIONS)
- Serve on citizen advisory boards and commissions
- Participate on task forces and ad hoc committees
- Perform volunteer services within county departments
- Serve on advisory boards and commissions
- Provide citizen input

Advisory Boards and Commissions

If you are interested in serving on an advisory board, there are many choices. The County Volunteer Coordinator can help you apply to work with issues surrounding aging, children and youth, developmental disabilities, human rights, job training, long-term care, mental health, substance abuse, county planning, or many other areas. Call the Kitsap County Volunteer Coordinator at 360-337-4650 or view opportunities online at: www.kitsapgov.com/volunteer/.

Provide input

- Give testimony at public meetings and forums
- Provide feedback through surveys, polls and focus groups
- Initiate two-way dialog with elected officials or staff
- Write letters or email

CITIZEN ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The **Public Disclosure Act (CH 42.17 RCW)** requires candidates for public office to file statements with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) reporting their campaign expenses and sources of funds. Elected officials are also required to file an annual statement with the Disclosure Commission declaring: their income, assets, and liabilities (in categories); their real estate holdings and transactions; and their affiliations. Copies of officeholder disclosure statements are on file with the PDC, and are available to the public. PDC statements are available at the Auditor's Election Office at the Givens Community Center.

Conflict of Interest Doctrine (CH 42.23 RCW) prohibits elected officials from entering into contracts which may be made for the benefit of their office, or accepting, directly or indirectly, any compensation, gratuity or reward in connection with such contract from any other person beneficially interested in the contract.

The **Appearance of Fairness Doctrine (CH 42.36 RCW)** goes beyond a conflict of interest to prohibit participation in a decision where there appears to be a conflict of interest by restricting the communication and activities of elected officials when acting in a quasi-judicial capacity.

During the pendency of any quasi-judicial proceeding, no member of a decision-making body may engage in *ex parte* communications with opponents or proponents with respect to the proposal which is the subject of the proceeding unless that person:

- Places on the record the substance of any written or oral *ex parte* communications concerning the decision of action; and
- Provides a public announcement at each hearing where action is considered or taken on the subject to which the communication related. The official must disclose the content of this communication and inform parties as to their right to rebut the substance of that communication.

CONTACTING KITSAP COUNTY

614 Division Street
Port Orchard, Washington 98366

DRIVING DIRECTIONS

Traveling south on St. Hwy 16 from Gorst, take the first Port Orchard exit, left onto Highway 160 along the Sinclair Inlet shoreline. Travel 2.7 miles along this road into the City of Port Orchard. Turn right on Cline Avenue, heading south uphill .2 miles. Then left on Division Street.

TOLL FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

From Bainbridge Island	206-842-2061
From Olalla	360-851-4147

INFORMATION ON THE COUNTY WEB SITE

www.kitsapgov.com

The Kitsap County Web site has extensive information resources. Web surfers click through to more than 2.2 million pages every month.

Kitsap County Parcel Locators (real estate)
<http://kcwppub3.co.kitsap.wa.us/website/parcelsearch/>

Kitsap County Citizen Survey Results (2004)
http://kitsapgov.com/boc/kc_final_report_04.pdf

Kitsap County Prosecutor Annual Report
<http://www.kitsapgov.com/pros/>

Kitsap County Land Use and Planning
<http://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/>

Kitsap County Road Maps
<http://www.kitsapgov.com/pw/roadlog.htm>

CONTACTING KITSAP COUNTY

County Satellite Locations

Community Centers:

- **Givens Community Center**, 1026 Sidney, Port Orchard
- **Silverdale Community Center**, 9729 Silverdale Way, also a satellite for the Division on Aging
- **Kingston Community Center**, 11212 St. Hwy. 104 in the heart of Kingston
- **Long Lake Community Center**, 5448 Long Lake Road, Port Orchard
- **Island Lake Community Center** 1099 NW Island Lake Road, north on Silverdale Way

Fairgrounds

Kitsap County Fairgrounds and Events Center, located at 1200 NW Fairgrounds Road in East Bremerton year-around activities, including the annual Fair and Stampede in August. The facility has two large spectator venues, outdoors, the (Thunderbird Stadium) and, indoors, the newly refurbished (Pavilion Field House). Ball fields located on this campus are also refurbished and lighted for tournament play.

To reserve county facilities for meetings or events, call 360-337-5350.

Satellite Offices

- Norm Dicks Government Center, Bremerton (downtown) is home to the Extension Office, the Health District and County Community Block Grant.
- **District Court North**, 19050 Jensen Way, Poulsbo
- **Juvenile Center**, 1339 Old Clifton, Port Orchard
- **Moderate Risk Waste Facility**, 5551 SW Imperial Way, Port Orchard

Other off-campus offices are county road sheds, sewer treatment facilities, the Public Works Annex (Port of Bremerton Industrial Park), and the Silverdale and Kingston Sheriff's Precincts.