
Chapter 1. Introduction & Background

1.1 Silverdale & the Regional Growth Center

The Silverdale Urban Growth Area (UGA), located in Central Kitsap County at the north end of Dyes Inlet, was established in 1998 with the adoption of the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan. In 2006, as part of the adoption of the 10-year update to the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan, the Silverdale UGA was expanded to encompass approximately 7,400 acres, the Silverdale Sub-Area Plan was adopted, and Draft Silverdale Design Guidelines were referenced in the Integrated Comprehensive Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 3, Appendix B.

In 2003, the Kitsap Countywide Planning Policies and Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) recognized portions of the Silverdale UGA as a regional growth center for employment and population. Regional growth centers are intended to be dense and diverse urban centers with a regional focus on significant business, cultural, governmental, residential and recreational activities. Development should result in compact and centralized working, shopping and activity areas linked by transit.

The downtown design guidelines support and describe design actions that are consistent with the vision, goals and policies of the Silverdale sub-area plan, which was built around Vision 2052, Silverdale Urban Design Study (SUDS), the Central Kitsap School District (CKSD) Youth Summit, and Silverdale Vision 2022.

Key aspects of the Vision 2052 “blueprint vision” are as follows:

Identify the unique amenities that we want to preserve and enhance, ensuring that our community remains a great place to live, work and play.¹

- 1. Urban Form:** To encourage a compact growth pattern that makes wise use of available land and promotes sound investment throughout the community by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and building that goes "up, rather than out," while at the same time preserving marine and mountain vistas.
- 2. Transportation:** To improve the convenience of our road system, reduce congestion, promote alternatives to reliance on the automobile, promote transit opportunities, and create environments that are inviting to pedestrian activity in selected areas of town.
- 3. Quality of Life & Public Safety:** To promote quality housing and encourage the development of safe, distinctive, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and districts which are provided with adequate public facilities.
- 4. Community Gathering Places:** To develop and maintain urban gathering places that:

¹ Silverdale 2022 Plan

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- Provide a venue and focus for Silverdale's civic life and identity, which creates the "sense of community" that serves to anchor citizens.
 - Offer educational, recreational, entertainment, and cultural enrichment opportunities for residents of all ages.

5. Quality of Life & Public Safety: To promote quality housing and encourage the development of safe, distinctive, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and districts which are provided with adequate public facilities. **Community Gathering Places:** To develop and maintain urban gathering places that:

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Offer educational, recreational, entertainment, and cultural enrichment opportunities for residents of all ages.

6. Economic Development: To enhance the diversity and strength of Silverdale's economic and employment base, retain our youth, capitalize on our strategic location and promote technology based enterprises that provide good jobs while placing fewer demands on public facilities and services.

7. Parks, Trails & Open Spaces: To promote and enhance the beauty and "walkability" of Silverdale by protecting our tree cover, expanding our parks and scenic open spaces, and providing "non-motorized" links between the parks and greenways and surrounding neighborhoods and districts.

7. Community Character & Design: To build and enhance Silverdale's character and sense of community by setting standards for, and requiring, higher quality design and amenities (e.g., design review; development of pocket parks, courtyards, landscaping and public art).

8. Environmentally Sensitive Areas: To preserve and enhance Silverdale's high quality of life by ensuring that new urban development conserves wetlands. Fish and wildlife habitat and maintains surface and ground water quality.

The design guidelines identify "special features" for each design district that describe and articulate the "unique (or special) amenities" contained within each district and strive to implement the above seven vision statements.

1.2 Design Guidelines Approach

The design guidelines present and describe overall urban design intent for Silverdale as a compact, diverse, mixed-use urban center. The guidelines use "unique (special) amenities" of Silverdale as a foundation for design intent and actions, organized in nine districts to focus on physical amenities and features specific to each district.

The Guidelines provide as much detail as possible by district to guide development that is compatible with existing development patterns, incorporates unique or special features, or influences a significant change in those patterns. The methodology is more complex by intent. It requires extra effort from all stakeholders to assure the implementation of a compact pedestrian-friendly and safe downtown.

1.3 Standards & Guidelines

The Silverdale Design Guidelines are composed primarily of Community Design *Guidelines*—the larger scale design principles that address overall development patterns, circulation, building configurations as well as mass, bulk, height, landscaping and setbacks and the *Standards* that implement the Guidelines. They address how districts relate to one another and the entire downtown, pedestrian and vehicular connection and circulation, and overall design composition within each district.

Mandatory vs. Interpretive Standards/Guidelines

Mandatory refers to the obligatory application of design guidelines and are commonly referred to as standards. The words “will,” “must,” and “shall” indicate a mandatory standard.

Interpretive refers to a translation of a design intent, where a variety of conceptualizations is possible and may require more flexibility in implementation. Words such as “could,” “can,” and “should” indicate a preference, but not a requirement.

1.4 Kitsap County Code & Silverdale Design Guidelines

1.4.1 Applicability. The design guidelines are specific to physical elements and contexts within downtown Silverdale and its districts and apply to all new construction or substantial reconstruction within the Silverdale Design Districts.

- A. For all existing structures in the design districts with exterior improvements or additions or both valued at less than 50 percent of the replacement value of the structure, only the new portion(s) of the structure and associated site improvements are subject to the design guidelines
- B. For all existing structures in the design districts with exterior remodels greater than 50 percent of the replacement value of the structure in any three-year period, then the standards apply to the entire structure and associated site improvements.

1.4.2 Conflicts. Where there is a conflict between the design guidelines and other Kitsap County regulations not associated with the adopted Building Code, the provisions in the design guidelines govern where applicable. If the design guidelines are silent on an issue that is addressed in Kitsap County Code, the code shall be followed.

1.4.3 Interpretation. If there is a question regarding the interpretation of the guidelines, the Director of the Community Development Department is authorized to make an official interpretation.

1.4.4 Appeals. Appeal procedures follow those outlined in KCC Chapter 21.04.

1.4.5 Variations. Variations from the design guidelines may be allowed as specified in KCC Title 17.

1.4.6 Building Heights. Height requirements will be based on the requirements of the underlying zone as outlined in KCC Title 17, except base maximum building height in the MU zone will be 65 feet except where otherwise stipulated in Kitsap County Code. In each design district, the base maximum height will be shown, as well as the maximum height that may be allowed if the increase in height:

- A. is consistent with recommendations of the fire marshal/fire district;
- B. is compatible with surrounding uses and zones or creates a buffer between incompatible uses; and
- C. results in a decrease in building coverage, an increase in public amenities, or a more creative use of land.

1.5 How to Use This Document

The Silverdale design guidelines differ from conventional urban design guidelines by focusing on geographically distinct districts that comprise the Silverdale commercial center, and by using the unique or special features within that district as a basis for many design actions.

To use the report, first refer to the Big Picture in Chapter Two for an overview of building composition, open space and circulation objectives for downtown as a whole. Second, in conjunction with the Site Plan Review Process, refer to the specific design district of interest. If a proposed project straddles the boundaries of two or more districts, the project shall abide by the standards/guidelines that will result in the most cohesive design overall, the Director will assist in making this determination. Third, for each district within the Site Plan/Land Use Review Process, refer to the design guidelines and their subcategories as follows:

1.5.1 Physical Identity Elements & Opportunities

Physical Identity Elements and Opportunities is a summary of the unique or special physical characteristics of the district. These can include creeks, building context, wooded slopes and emerging development patterns. These features set the stage for the application of specific design guidelines.

1.5.2 Design Intent

The design intent is a general statement of the vision or aspired design outcome for a district. There are many acceptable ways for public and private interests to accommodate the design intent, providing stakeholders with options and flexibility for innovation and creativity in achieving the objectives of the design intent.

1.5.3 Design Principles

Design principles are the essential rules or directions for accomplishing the design intent. They address the relationships between and among the physical components of

development (streets, buildings, walkways, parking, uses, etc.) rather than detailed design features.

1.5.4 Design Actions

Design actions are the specific ways to accomplish design intent and principles such as:

- Compositional structure (how the major physical parts of a district are assembled: allowable building area, street and sidewalk network, and key open space features)
- Building Orientation, Height and Type
- Open Space
- Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Space and Circulation

1.5.5 Design Examples

In many districts, examples are provided to demonstrate various ways to accomplish the design guidelines. These examples are not mandatory; they are instructional sketches and diagrams, visually portraying ways to accomplish design intent for specific sites.

1.6 Silverdale Commercial Center: An Emerging Downtown

Downtown Silverdale is an unincorporated regional growth center with different types of commercial, office, civic and residential patterns. Taken as a whole, there is not currently a coherent or integrated downtown/community center area because of the historical, incremental growth pattern. However, most of the activities and functions of a downtown and civic/community center are present. Lacking are well-defined centers, a compact human-scale, and strong physical and circulation connectors between and among the various centers and districts. The design guidelines address these issues of coherence and physical integration.

1.6.1 Elements of Community Form

The community form of downtown Silverdale provides a foundation for an underlying design strategy for a coherent and integrated downtown. Silverdale is divided into nine design districts, each with a different set of physical or functional conditions. These form the basis or framework of the downtown Silverdale design guidelines and are summarized below.

1.6.2 Silverdale Geophysical Boundaries

- Downtown Silverdale is located on a small delta or water discharge area from surrounding ridges and hills, forming a triangular shape lowland along the north edge of Dyes Inlet, characterized by two, possibly three, creek drainages (Strawberry Creek, Clear Creek, and a culvert drainage referred to in the handbook as “Silverdale Creek”)
- Limited access Highway 303 to the north and northeast
- Bucklin Hill ridge to the east with intermediate topographical benches in the vicinity of the Northeast Business Park district
- Dyes Inlet in Puget Sound to the south

- West Hill topographical bench between the west side of Silverdale Way and Highway 3; and the source of Strawberry Creek flowing to the southeast through Old Town and into Dyes Inlet

1.6.3 Nine Distinct Districts of Activities & Development Patterns

- Kitsap Mall Center (Kitsap Mall and surrounding shopping outlets including big box retail and shopping plazas).
- Old Town (Waterfront area and along Washington Ave NW and Strawberry Creek and portions of Silverdale Creek, emerging from a culvert south of Bucklin Hill Road).
- Waterfront (Waterfront area and along NW Bucklin Hill Road east of Silverdale Way).
- Northeast Business District to the north and east.
- West Hill Neighborhood (residential around Silverdale Loop NW), located on a western rise or topographical bench west of Silverdale Way
- Clear Creek Village, a corridor formed by the eastern edge of the Kitsap Mall Center and Bucklin Hill Districts, and forming the western edge of the Waterfront and the Northeast Business Districts.
- Bucklin Hill Center, for the area around the intersection of Silverdale Way and Bucklin Hill Road.
- Waaga Way Town Center, for commercial areas north of Highway 303 and Anderson Hill Road.
- Provost Commercial District, for commercial areas west of Highway 3 and south of Anderson Hill Road.

1.6.4 Road Types & Development Patterns

Community Arterials & Boulevards

- Silverdale Way (with connections to Highway 3 with a half diamond interchange on north edge of project area)
- Ridgetop Boulevard NW (with connections to Highway 3 via Kitsap Mall Boulevard and Highway 303 along the north and east boundaries of downtown Silverdale)
- NW Bucklin Hill Road
- Clear Creek Road
- Kitsap Mall Boulevard
- Anderson Hill Road
- Mickelberry Road
- Myhre Road
- Randall Way
- Waaga Way Extension and connector roads

Community Streets	}	
Residential Streets	}	Existing throughout Silverdale
Residential Lanes/Alleys	}	

1.6.5 Physical Connections Between & Among Districts

Connectivity Challenges:

- Major arterials throughout Silverdale act as barriers and edges between districts rather than as connecting features, characterized by five lanes, with limited pedestrian paths that are safe and comfortable.
- Shopping plaza, center and mall development types are “islands,” with buildings set back from arterials and surrounded by large parking lots with few if any driveway connections to adjacent parcels.
- Old Town is a small peninsula oriented to Dyes Inlet and bounded and contained essentially by Silverdale Way and Bucklin Hill Road.
- West Hill Neighborhood is insulated from the remainder of downtown by a sharp rise in topography along its eastern edge.

Connectivity Opportunities:

- Clear Creek and its riparian area form both a boundary and a connecting open space element in a triangular shape north to south, affecting the Kitsap Mall Center, Clear Creek Village, Northeast Business, Waterfront, and portions of Old Town Districts.
- The waterfront edge of Dyes Inlet is a visual connector as well as partial physical connector for the Old Town and Waterfront Districts.
- Significant land now providing surface parking could provide a future development opportunity to infill and connect development throughout the downtown.

1.7 Changing Nature of Shopping Center Industry: An Opportunity

Shopping centers throughout North America are undergoing significant design changes due to market forces, competition, and aging malls. Two development patterns are emerging as a result of these pressures: mixed-use centers and town centers.

1.7.1 Mixed-use Centers

Mixed-use centers are retail-based developments with residential or office uses or both. They are well-served by transit, with a walkable, pedestrian-oriented environment that provides effective access to goods and services. Residential or office uses are configured in both horizontal developments with separate street access or vertical or above grade configurations with secondary uses above ground level retail or office. A major benefit of mixed-use centers is ease of access between housing, employment, and shopping in a compact active area. Many existing shopping centers are converting to mixed-use centers with peripheral or perimeter commercial developments and open-air pedestrian concourses connecting the core of the older centers to adjacent streets.

1.7.2 Town Centers

Town Centers are mixed-use developments with residential or office/retail uses combined with civic or cultural uses. They often serve as a focus of community life for surrounding areas. They provide basic retail services and gathering or leisure places for local residents. They contain shared parking, provide town squares or village greens as central

focus areas, and capitalize on natural environmental features as desired amenities. The residential uses are deemed the “glue” for Town Centers, providing an on-site population. Libraries, community centers, exercise facilities and other public or semi-public uses are often included.

Major components of town or village centers include:

- A “main street” forms the heart of the center with two or three story buildings, pedestrian-oriented retail at the ground floor level and offices or residential above or along the periphery.
- Parking is distributed throughout the site in smaller lots with landscaping and clearly separated pedestrian walkways that connect to buildings.
- A village green provides passive recreation opportunities as well as outdoor retail sales space.
- Decreased front and side yard setbacks for non-residential uses generate a compact development pattern.
- A continuous local or interior street network, public or private, connects the “main street,” buildings, open space, parking to adjacent arterials and local street network.