

## ***Chapter 2: Community Setting***

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**2010 Plan Update:** Section 2.3 *Population and housing* and the County population projections were revised. The remainder of this chapter has been retained in the original 2002 Plan format.

Jefferson County was one of the first counties organized by the Washington Territorial Legislature in 1852. The county was named after President Thomas Jefferson. The county is located on the Olympic Peninsula in the northwestern corner of the state bordered by the Pacific Ocean on the west and Puget Sound on the east. The county is 1,805 square miles in size, the 18th largest in the state.

### **2.1 Climate**

Washington State's climate is strongly influenced by moisture-laden air masses created in the Pacific Ocean. The air masses may move into the region any time of the year, but particularly during fall, winter and spring seasons. The flow of air from the Pacific Ocean is interrupted first by the Olympic Mountains and then significantly by the Cascade Mountains. As a result, the portion of the State west of the Cascades receives moderate to heavy precipitation, while the eastern portion of the State receives a light to moderate amount of precipitation.

The Cascades also affect temperature ranges in the state. The west side is influenced by maritime air masses are generally milder than those that sweep down from the Canadian Rocky Mountains on the east side of the State. Consequently, eastern Washington usually has colder winters and hotter summers, while western Washington is milder and more frost-free.

Jefferson County is located within the West Coast Marine Climatic Region with 5 distinct climatic zones that vary with elevation, topography, rainfall, and position with respect to bodies of water and wind patterns. The variations are significant ranging from 200 inches annually in the rain forest to 18 inches in Port Townsend in the "rain shadow" of the Olympic Mountains.

In Port Townsend, mean temperatures vary from a high of 71 degrees in July to a low of 34 degrees Fahrenheit in January with extreme variations recorded at -3 to a high of 102 degrees Fahrenheit. Average annual precipitation is about 18 inches with a mean growing season with temperatures above 32 degrees Fahrenheit for about 170-190 days. Approximately 80% of the precipitation occurs from October through March with less than 6% falling from June through August.

### **2.2 Transportation systems**

#### **US and Washington State Highways**

State highways form the backbone of Jefferson County's transportation system. They are also an important component of the non-motorized transportation system, providing bicycle touring links to neighboring counties and regions.

- US-101 (a principal arterial) loops around the Olympic Peninsula, connecting Jefferson County to Clallam County and the Pacific Coast and to Mason and Thurston Counties and the State capital, Olympia.

## Jefferson County Non-Motorized Transportation and Recreational Trails Plan 2010

- SR-104 (a principal arterial) provides a link from US-101 near Discovery Bay across the Hood Canal Bridge to Kitsap County and the Washington State Ferry system terminals at Bainbridge Island and Kingston.
- SR-19 (a minor arterial) and SR-20 (a principal arterial) are major north-south routes connecting Port Townsend and other population, employment, and commercial centers in the north county to the south County and to SR-104 and US-101.
- SR-116 (a major collector) provides a connection from SR-19 through Port Hadlock to the naval ordinance facility on Indian Island and Fort Flagler State Park on Marrowstone Island.

Arterial roads provide regional and inter-regional mobility for travel and freight movement with limited access to adjoining property. Collector roads collect traffic from and distribute it to both arterials and local access roads. They also provide some access to adjoining property. Arterials and collectors carry high volumes of traffic.

### **Jefferson County roadways**

Jefferson County's road system consists of collector roads and local access roads. Collector roads that are important non-motorized transportation routes include Hastings Avenue, South Discovery Road, Cape George Road, Four Corners Road, Irondale Road, Chimacum Road, Center Road, Eaglemount Road, Oak Bay Road, and Paradise Bay Road. Local access roads provide direct access to adjoining property. They are typically low volume and low speed roads. The following local access roads provide important non-motorized transportation connections: Cedar Avenue, South Jacob Miller Road, Old Gardiner Road, and West Valley Road. There are also numerous platted, but unopened street rights-of-way that have the potential to be non-motorized transportation and recreational trail routes.

Typically, County roads have adequate capacity for the volume of motorized travel that they carry. However, many County roads lack adequate sidewalks or shoulders to provide safe and comfortable routes for bicyclists and pedestrians.

### **Port Townsend streets**

Port Townsend has one major arterial (SR-20 / Sims Way) and a network of minor arterials, collectors, and local access streets. It also has numerous platted, but unopened street rights-of-way that have the potential to be non-motorized transportation routes. The reader should consult the City of Port Townsend Comprehensive Plan and the City's Non-motorized Transportation Plan for additional information.

### **Jefferson Transit**

Jefferson Transit provides commuter bus service throughout eastern Jefferson County from Port Townsend south to Port Hadlock, Port Ludlow, Quilcene, and Brinnon, west to Sequim, and across the Hood Canal Bridge to Poulsbo. Jefferson Transit also operates bus service between Forks and Quinault on the County's West End. Bicycle racks are available on all bus routes. Jefferson Transit also provides paratransit services, ride matching programs, and vanpooling programs to commuters and major employers. The system does not operate on New Year's, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, or Christmas.

## Jefferson County Non-Motorized Transportation and Recreational Trails Plan 2010

In 2001, Jefferson Transit operated 7 fixed routes including transfers between Port Townsend and county routes, and with neighboring Island, Kitsap, Clallam, Mason, and Grays Harbor Transit systems. The system carried 244,000 riders averaging 13.28 riders per service hour overall, and 32.49 on the Port Townsend shuttle - the highest volume route.

Transit riders can use connections between the Jefferson, Clallam, and Grays Harbor Transit systems to travel from eastern Jefferson County through Sequim, Port Angeles, and Forks to the Olympic National Park and Aberdeen and Hoquiam.

### **Washington State Ferry**

The Washington State Ferries provides vehicle and passenger ferry service between Port Townsend and Whidbey Island on a daily basis. There are 15 trips per day during the summer on the 30 minute run.

Bicycles and kayaks are given differential rates and loaded from the vehicle access ramps. The ferry service stores the equipment in areas separate and secure from other vehicles.

### **Puget Sound Express**

Puget Sound Express provides daily passenger boat service between Port Townsend and Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands from May through September. A limited number of bicycles and kayaks can be carried on each run.

## **2.3 Population and housing (Revised for 2010 Update)**

Jefferson County was established as a county in 1852. The resident population increased on a gradual basis with peak periods in 1910, 1950, and the present day, and bust periods in 1920 and 1960 due to economic downturns.

Early residents were employed in fishing, agriculture, forestry, and some limited manufacturing activities located in Port Townsend, Port Hadlock, Irondale, and Port Ludlow. Current residents are increasingly employed by manufacturing, service, and related enterprises located in Port Townsend, unincorporated Jefferson County, and elsewhere in northwest Washington.

Between 2000 and 2010 the County's population increased from 25,953 to an estimated 30,912, an annual average rate of 1.9%.

There are two Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) in Jefferson County – the City of Port Townsend and the Port Hadlock Urban Growth Area. The City's estimated 2010 population of 8,925 is 29% of the total county population. The Port Hadlock UGA's estimated 2010 population of 2,553 is 9.7% of the total county population.

Jefferson County population projections – According to the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), Medium Series projection, Jefferson County's population will increase to 37,447 by the year 2020, an increase of 21%, and to 40,139 by 2024, an increase of 30%.

The City of Port Townsend population is projected to increase to 13,329 by 2024, approximately 33% of the total county population. The Port Hadlock UGA

Jefferson County Non-Motorized Transportation and Recreational Trails Plan  
2010

population is projected to increase to 4,906 by 2024, approximately 12.2% of the total county population.

*Socioeconomic characteristics* – the US Department of Census compiled demographic statistics for jurisdictional areas in 2000 including Washington State, Jefferson County, and Port Townsend.

According to the statistical findings, the population within Jefferson County had socioeconomic characteristics that were significantly different than the averages typical of the state. For example, the average household size was 2.2 persons within the county compared with 2.5 persons in Washington State. Likewise, the median age was 47.1 years for residents within the county compared with 35.3 years in Washington State.

Jefferson County also had a large percent of married couples without children in the household (70%).

Overall, the statistics indicate residents of Jefferson County are likely to be older and living in childless households with recreational interests that coincide with these socioeconomic characteristics.

Jefferson County Non-Motorized Transportation and Recreational Trails Plan  
2010

*Population projections by nation, state, region, county and city*

	United States	Washington State	Puget Sound (King/Kitsap/Pierce/Snohomish Counties)		
				Jefferson County (1852)	Port Townsend (1860)
1900	76,094,000	518,100	196,285	5,712	3,443
1910	92,407,000	1,142,000	492,306	8,337	4,181
1920	106,466,000	1,356,600	634,254	6,557	2,847
1930	123,077,000	1,563,400	736,996	8,346	3,970
1940	132,594,000	1,736,200	820,202	8,918	4,683
1950	152,271,000	2,379,000	1,196,172	11,618	6,888
1960	180,671,000	2,853,200	1,512,979	9,639	5,074
1970	204,879,000	3,413,300	1,938,899	10,661	5,241
1980	226,500,000	4,132,200	2,240,437	15,965	6,067
1990	250,410,000	4,866,692	2,748,895	20,406	7,001
2000	268,266,000	5,894,121	3,275,847	25,953	8,334
2005	275,604,000	6,291,772	3,454,780	27,600	
2010	282,575,000	6,693,329	3,660,179	30,912	
<b>Forecasts</b>					
2015	288,997,000	7,142,148	3,888,572	34,035	
2020	294,364,000	7,610,090	4,122,117	37,447	

**Annual average percent change by increment**

1900-1910	2.0%	8.2%	9.6%	3.9%	2.0%
1910-1920	1.4%	1.7%	2.6%	-2.4%	-3.8%
1920-1930	1.5%	1.4%	1.5%	2.4%	3.4%
1930-1940	0.7%	1.1%	1.1%	0.7%	1.7%
1940-1950	1.4%	3.2%	3.8%	2.7%	3.9%
1950-1960	1.7%	1.8%	2.4%	-1.9%	-3.0%
1960-1970	1.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.0%	0.3%
1970-1980	1.0%	1.9%	1.5%	4.1%	1.5%
1980-1990	1.0%	1.6%	2.1%	2.5%	1.4%
1990-2000	0.7%	1.9%	1.8%	2.4%	1.8%
2000-2005	0.5%	1.3%	1.1%	1.2%	
2005-2010	0.5%	1.2%	1.2%	2.3%	
<b>Forecasts</b>					
2010-2015	0.5%	1.3%	1.2%	1.9%	
2015-2020	0.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.9%	

Sources:

US Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, Number 1018,  
Mid Series 14: fertility=1.8 births/woman, mortality=81.2 years,  
500,000 yearly net immigration.

Washington State, Office of Financial Management, Forecasting Division,  
OFM Forecast 2007 for GMA Projections, Medium Series

Washington State Data Book, Office of Financial Management

Population figures and Forecasts that were revised for the 2010 update are **Highlighted**.

Jefferson County Non-Motorized Transportation and Recreational Trails Plan  
2010