



CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Understanding the community and geographic context for this *PROS Plan* are instrumental in assuring its success. Shoreline is unique in its regional location, how it evolved as a city, the natural and physical features that define it, and the community that will inevitably decide its future. The City of Shoreline's natural features and development history impact the type and location of its existing and future parks. The age ranges and household structure define the users of parks and recreation programs. Regional context, natural features, history and the people of Shoreline are significant because they define natural, political, and cultural limits and opportunities of this plan.

While the previous chapter defined the process of *PROS* planning, the intent of this chapter is to clearly establish Shoreline's community both in terms of the broader landscape features and the residents who rely on Shoreline's parks and recreation programs. These topics are addressed in the following sections:

- Regional Context
- Natural and Physical Features
- History
- Demographic Information



REGIONAL CONTEXT

Shoreline is located in Western Washington, 15 miles north of downtown Seattle, the state's largest city. The Puget Sound defines Shoreline's western boundary. The Puget Sound is a saltwater body stretching between the Olympic mountain range and the Cascade mountain range. Lake Washington, a 13-mile freshwater lake is to the east of Shoreline.

The City of Shoreline is approximately 12 square miles. It is generally surrounded by the older cities of Seattle, Edmonds, Woodway and Lake Forest Park. Shoreline is Washington's thirteenth largest city with nearly 53,000 residents. It is primarily residential with more than 70 percent of the households being single-family residences. Due to its proximity to a large metropolitan area, and the outward expanse of development, Shoreline has a limited supply of undeveloped land.

Major transportation corridors also impact Shoreline. Two major state highways run the length of Shoreline: Interstate 5 and State Route 99. These highways establish arterial connections into, out of, and through the City, but also create physical barriers within the city.



Shoreline stretches along 3.4 miles of the Puget Sound, which is a highly valued resource. However, access to the Puget Sound is limited due to private development and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad line. A subtle ridge runs north/south through Shoreline creating a series of secondary watersheds that drain either west to the Puget Sound or east to Lake Washington. In addition, there are multiple freshwater streams and natural drainage systems that create undulating topography along the Puget Sound. Shoreline also has a number of ponds, bogs and lakes.

NATURAL AND PHYSICAL FEATURES

Climate in Shoreline is moderated by coastal marine air, creating a fairly consistent and mild climate. Average annual rainfall is 38.27 inches. While soil content varies across the City, the majority of soils in Shoreline, due to a higher clay content, drain slowly and often pool on relatively flat sites or runoff in sheet flows from sites with grade changes. The amount of rainfall and how the ground responds to it are important considerations for site development relating to parks. For instance, some sites may be less appropriate for ball fields due to topography and drainage and more appropriate for a nature trail.

Once, primarily a coniferous forest with areas of riparian vegetation, the area has developed extensively over the years retaining little of the native habitat. Areas that remain in a natural state tend to be located on steep slopes or within wetlands. These areas are highly valued for their aesthetic appeal, wildlife habitat, stormwater mitigation properties, and contrast to urbanized areas.



HISTORY

Historically, Native American peoples who lived along the shores of the Puget Sound and local streams populated the Shoreline area. Growth of the Euro-American population expanded in the 1880s with the influx of the railroad. Richmond Beach was the first area to develop with the arrival of the Great Northern Railroad. In 1906 the Seattle-Everett Interurban line was constructed through Shoreline. The North Trunk Road was constructed in 1913, a brick road between Seattle and Shoreline. These transportation improvements made suburban growth much more feasible.

The area changed over time. In the early twentieth century large tracts of land were divided into smaller lots in anticipation of future development. Car travel considerably broadened the settlement pattern. Commercial development began concentrating along Aurora Avenue by the late 1930s, as this was the region's primary north/south travel route. Population in the area continued expanding through the 1960s stabilizing in the 1970s. The City of Shoreline was incorporated on August 31, 1995, and in June of 1997 the City assumed all responsibility for parks and recreation programs from King County.

The City of Shoreline is comprised of thirteen neighborhood organizations. The City is primarily residential in character. City residents value the high quality schools and neighborhoods. Interstate 5 bisects the community north to south and restricts east to west access to neighborhoods and facilities. The Aurora Corridor (Highway 99) is a main north-south commercial route that runs through the City of Shoreline and provides a mix of retail, services, office and residential uses. Other smaller commercial neighborhood nodes are located at major intersections around the City. Shoreline is also home to the Fircrest Campus, an 86-acre institution managed by Washington State Department of Social and Health Services and the Department of Natural Resources.



Demographic data analyzed between 1990 and 2000 provides insight on the people who live in Shoreline, how the population compares to other areas, and how the population has changed over time. This information is an important component of the *PROS Plan*, as it identifies the resident base.

In summary, 56% of the population is 35 years or older, higher than both the State of Washington and the national averages. Individuals under the age of 35 years are less than the State of Washington and the national averages. The population is predominately white, at 77% of the total population, though this percentage has dropped 10% over the past decade indicating that the ethnic makeup of Shoreline will continue to diversify. Household size is declining. Over the past three decades household size has declined by 76% to 2.5 persons per household. Single family homes make up 74% of the housing units in Shoreline.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Additional information on demographic data can be found in Appendix B: Secondary Demographic Data.

POPULATION AND AGE RANGES

The population of Shoreline increased 13% over the last decade, from 47,100 in 1990 to 53,025 in 2000. About two-thirds of this growth was due to changes in municipal boundaries. The City's 2003 Population is estimated at 52,730. The population is anticipated to grow over the next 30 years, and is expected to increase by 7-12% by 2030.

The median age of Shoreline residents is 39 years old, up from a median age of 36 years in 1990. "Baby Boomers", those born between 1946 and 1964, form the largest population groups in Shoreline comprising approximately 34% of the population.

In order to separate the population into age-sensitive user groups, and retain the ability to identify future age-sensitive trends, the following age categories are utilized based on the 2000 U.S. Census (see Figure 2.1).

Under 5 years (5.2%) – This group represents users of preschool and tot recreation programs and facilities. These individuals make up the future users of youth recreation programs.

5 to 14 years (13.1%) – This group represents current youth



Demographic Analysis
Continued

program participants.

15 to 24 years (11.9 %) – This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of the youth recreation programs and into adult programs.

25 years to 34 years (12.8%) – This group represents involvement in adult recreation programming with characteristics of beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.

35 to 54 years (33.9%) – This group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters.

55 years plus (23.1%) – This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren. This group generally also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

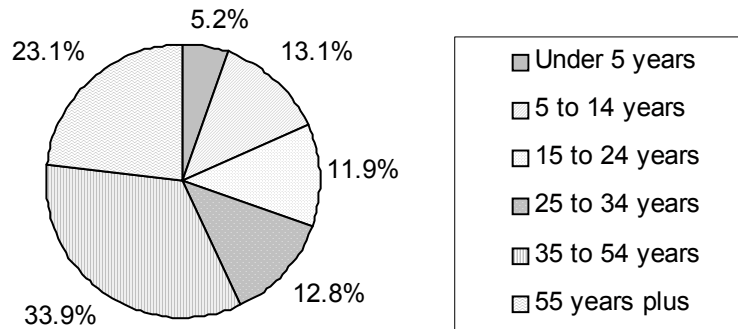


Figure 2.1: Population Breakdown
Source: 2000 U.S. Census



AGING COMMUNITY AND POPULATION COMPARISON

As a predominantly World War II suburb of Seattle, most of Shoreline’s original residents moved into the community as young households in the 1940’s, 1950’s and 1960’s. Forty to fifty years later these households have now “aged in place”. During the 1980’s, the population over 65 years old increased from 10% to 14% of the population. During the 1990s, the population over 65 years old increased only slightly to 14.5 % of the population.

Demographic Analysis
Continued

The following graph, Figure 2.2, indicates that Shoreline has lower populations of individuals ages 0 to 34 years, and slightly higher populations of individuals 35 plus compared to both the State of Washington and the national averages.

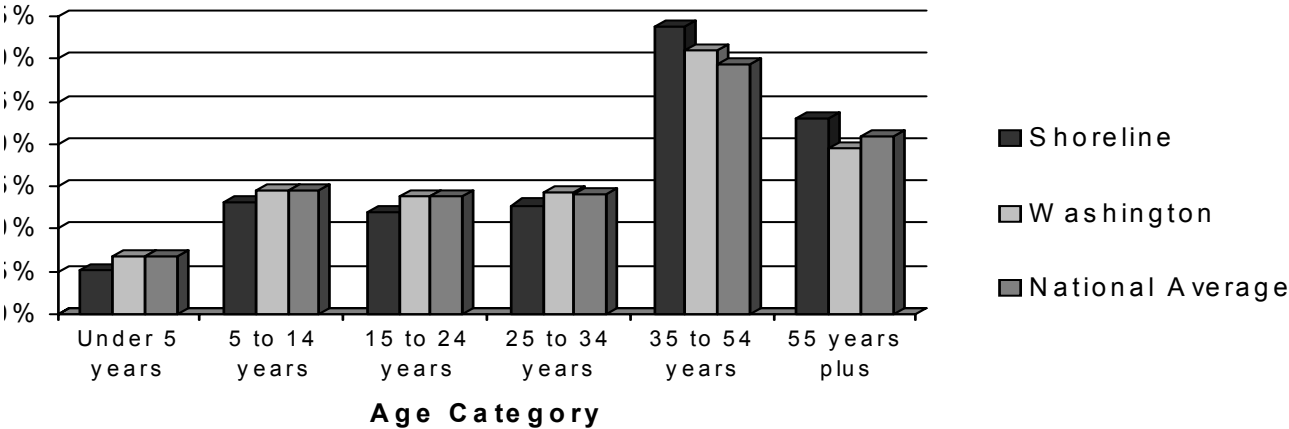


Figure 2.2: Population Comparisons – Shoreline, Washington, National Average. Source: 2000 U.S. Census



Demographic Analysis
Continued

ETHNICITY AND GENDER

The 2000 U.S. Census data indicated the majority of the population in Shoreline is white (77.0%). Persons of Asian descent make up 13.2% of the population while 4.3% is Two or More Races, 2.8% Black or African American, 1.5% is Some Other Race, 0.9% is American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

City residents of Caucasian-European origin decreased from 87% of the total population of Shoreline in 1990 to 75% in 2000. Additionally, foreign-born residents of Shoreline increased from 12% of the population in 1990 to 17% of the population in 2000. These trends indicate that Shoreline's population is becoming increasingly diverse. The population consists of 48.2% male and 51.8% female according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

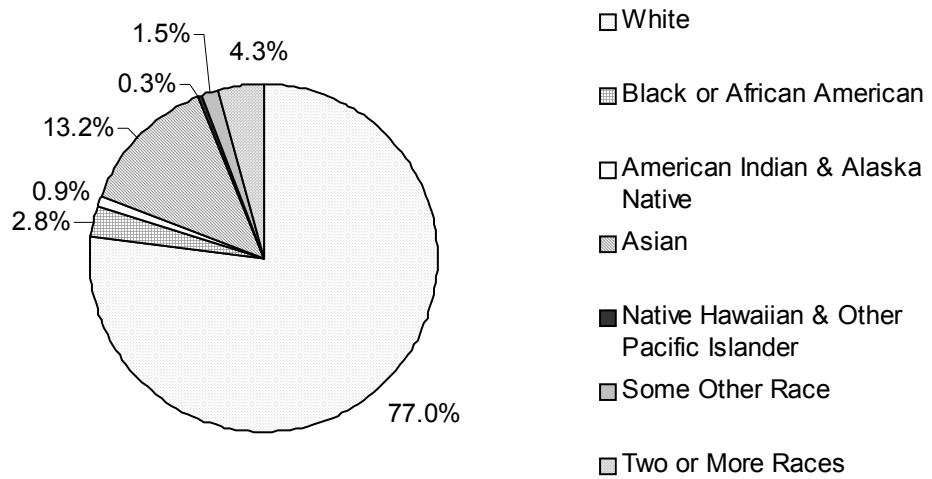


Figure 2.3: Ethnicity
Source: 2000 U.S. Census



HOUSEHOLD

From 1970 to 2000, Shoreline's household size decreased by 24%. The major change occurred in the 1970's with a decrease of 17%, from 3.27 persons per household to 2.72. The pace of this change slowed in the 1980's when the household size declined by 7% to 2.53 persons per household. In the 1990's, the household size decreased only slightly by 1.2% to 2.5 persons per household, suggesting that household size will likely continue to decline slowly. This current household size is slightly larger than the countywide average of 2.39 persons per household.

Demographic Analysis
Continued

According to the 2000 Census, Shoreline has 21,210 housing units with approximately 74% single-family homes. The majority of residents, 65%, are in family households consisting of two or more related people, more than one quarter (26%) of all households consist of one person and 9% have one or more members 65 years and older. Shoreline has adopted a housing target of 2,651 new housing units by 2022 based on past growth trends and the King County Countywide Planning Policies (KCCPPs).

Median household income in 1999 (2000 U.S. Census) was \$51,658 with the largest share of households (14.1%) earning \$75,000 to \$99,999. Another 13.9% earn \$60,000 to \$74,999, and 10.0% earn \$50,000 to \$59,999.

Despite the fact that Shoreline is a mature suburban community, its population and housing stock continue to grow. Attractive single-family housing is bringing new families to the community. New housing is being created primarily through single-family infill construction and limited new apartments in existing neighborhoods. Many existing homes are being remodeled to meet the needs of their owners.



COMMUNITY PROFILE CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of Shoreline's regional context, natural and physical features, history, and demographic data provides the following conclusions:

- Shoreline is a desirable place to live due to its proximity to Seattle, accessibility, moderate climate, and quality of schools, neighborhoods, and outdoor resources.
- Remaining natural resources and access to the Puget Sound are regional assets.
- Shoreline developed primarily as a hub between Seattle and Everett via railroad and transportation improvements. Development patterns are typical of suburban communities that developed extensively through the 1970s including commercial strips along major transportation corridors, limited sidewalk system, and expansive residential neighborhoods.
- Shoreline is largely developed offering few opportunities for new parkland.
- Populations in Shoreline will continue to grow slowly and the demand on existing park facilities and programs will increase.
- A high percentage of Shoreline residents are 35 and older, white, and middle income. Shoreline is an aging community and will have need for recreation programming and services that meet these residents' needs. There is a higher percentage of older citizens in Shoreline compared to the state of Washington as well as the national average. The interests and needs must be considered in facility and program planning processes.
- A high percentage (74%) of housing units in Shoreline are single family homes. Single family homes are more likely to have yards and provide some level of private open space. As sites redevelop and smaller lots are created more parks and open space will be needed for the loss of private open space.