



Thomas Hunter



After what is now 17 years of municipal service, I find that time reflecting on the overall journey becomes less frequent, but certainly the fondness and enjoyment grows. Serving communities by way of municipal service runs deep in my family. As far back as I can remember, my childhood summers were filled with trips to the office with my father, which specifically resulted in me snooping around service crews at the Kitsap Public Utility District (KPUD). Eventually I was learning how to repair fire hydrants, tap water mains, and all sorts of other fascinating activities well before the legal age to operate a vehicle. From then on it is easy to say that I was one of the lucky few who had been infected with the municipal service bug.

Following high school (balancing summer work at the KPUD) and a heavy sports load), I quickly opted to go into the industry full time while pursuing education in the evenings. For me, the time spent working to improve peoples' lives through the delivery of services was and continues to be a driving force. During those early years in my career, I was fortunate enough to meet my wife of now 15 years and start a truly amazing family. As I transitioned to Silverdale Water District (SWD) my career path quickly started to transition, offering me large opportunities for growth and development. During my time at SWD, I began overseeing various different service components for the district and eventually transitioned into the engineering track where I managed large capital projects in urban corridors while maintaining operational oversight of many public facing service activities.

Although I cherished my colleagues and work at SWD, an opportunity with the City of Port Orchard came available that offered me the chance to immerse myself in all aspects of public works, engineering, land use, and utilities which led to one of those sad and exciting transitions that we all experience professionally. I am so thankful for the skills and experience that I gained while at SWD. I quickly found new challenges managing public works, utilities, parks, capital programs, and permitting activities for Port Orchard. As if that transition didn't meet the threshold for "drinking from a firehose", Port Orchard was exploding with new growth and significant urban redevelopment. It was at this time, and with the additions to staff that I had made, that City Council and the Mayor (strong mayor form) had entrusted me with taking the lead on the second biggest private residential development in the State of Washington, a growth pattern that far exceeded the City's ability to manage.

This large undertaking and pivotal transition for the community centered around massive development agreement negotiations involving large capital improvements for water, sewer, transportation, and parks. In addition, we were negotiating a public private partnership for a downtown redevelopment project that included the construction of a new community center, a large regional banking headquarters, a new

mixed use and residential campus exceeding historical height allowances, and significant pedestrian/multi modal improvements. Finally, I was also in the middle of leadership effort to reconstruct the City's permit process by way of establishing a new permit center (including a new facility to house it). We did this in an effort to preserve the integrity of the City's permitting process and infrastructure, but also to reimagine our development process such that we could meet the communities needs of today and tomorrow. All of this was set in the context of a large new form-based code update that we had just completed.

During this time, I found true professional enjoyment in assisting a community as it transitioned at a pace none of us thought was possible. It was in the next few years that an amazing opportunity in Port Angeles presented itself and since that time I have had the fortune of leading a remarkable team through very similar challenges as to what was experienced in Port Orchard. This role however encompassed a larger scope relative to Port Angeles, being a full-service City, the scope of the Director position, and the opportunities and challenges that awaited me. Port Angeles was/is not only experiencing large commercial and noncommercial growth but has dramatic urban pressure from an intense metro population as the largest city on the peninsula as well as over 2.5 million visitors every summer from the Olympic National Park alone. When combined with the industrial development and urban redevelopment of the downtown corridor, it is an understatement to say Port Angeles is quickly changing.

Amidst my time working on significant legislative affairs on behalf of the City Manager's office, I have also had the fortune of leading a team of Deputy Directors to improve our delivery of major service functions (utility operations, development review, CIP engineering, internal services). All this great work has been focused on the primary mission of ensuring our services preserve the integrity of infrastructure while creatively redefining the way that our community interacts with public spaces in a manner that meets the needs of today while forecasting the needs of tomorrow. At the same time, we have made amazing strides in strengthening relationships between departments, increasing resource sharing, and fortifying the City's ability to be resilient through this period of high growth.

At this stage in both my professional and personal life, my family and I have been intently waiting for an opportunity to relocate to the Pflugerville area for a number of important reasons. Quite simply, as we enter into a new phase of our lives, raising our children and preparing for college, we want to move to a community in the Pflugerville area that offered a great education system, close access to quality secondary education, and a positive sense of community. As we have family and friends in the area (and stretching across multiple states over to Florida) we wanted to be more centrally located as well. For me looking at the next 20 years, I see a rare and unique opportunity in the intersection of professional and personal goals meeting squarely in the middle. From preparing ourselves for the transition when the perfect opportunity arose, to selecting which university to obtain my masters degree from, we have been intentionally focused on being ready for an opportunity such as this. After reviewing the City's strategic plan, budget, CIP, organizational structure, and council/leadership interactions, I am confident in both my ability to bring years of leadership and experience to an amazing City and my family's desire to call Pflugerville home.