



WINTER 2016

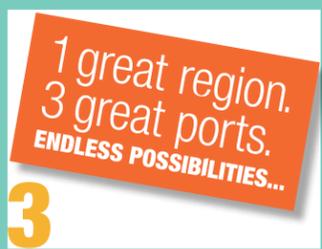
PORTWORKS

WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY, CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, BUILDING THE ECONOMY

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PORT MAKES THE CUT TO BUILD \$8M WDFW FACILITY



BUILDING TO HOUSE 100 EMPLOYEES

This perspective by Mackenzie is of a 40,000 square foot tilt-construction building the Port proposed for the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife building project.

The Port of Ridgefield was named the “apparent successful proposer” by the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services for the construction and leasing of a 31,400 square foot building to house the regional headquarters of the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife. The agency currently employs approximately 100 people at its Vancouver, Wash. location. All operations will move to Ridgefield if DES and the Port of Ridgefield negotiate a mutually-satisfactory agreement.

Ridgefield CEO Brent Grening. “Our staff and advisory team members worked diligently to craft a thoughtful, competitive response to DES’s Request for Proposal. We are thrilled the Port of Ridgefield was chosen and we look forward to welcoming WDFW to our community,” Grening said.



“...this will be a very big deal for Ridgefield.”

Brent Grening, CEO

The estimated construction cost of the project is \$8 million on a Port-owned site at South 11th Street in Ridgefield. In addition to the office facility, plans call for 8,000 square feet of covered, secure storage.

The Port and DES met on November 24, 2015 to determine a schedule for drafting preliminary plans required for lease negotiations. Plans are scheduled to be provided by DES in mid-January 2016, a final draft lease will be prepared and submitted for Port and DES consideration, and a firm project cost estimate will be developed and presented to the Port, DES and the Washington State Office of Financial Management for approval.

“If this all comes to fruition, as we believe it will, this will be a very big deal for Ridgefield,” said Port of

If all stages in the process are agreeable to all parties, building design, site analysis and permitting will begin in February. Construction is expected to be completed in early 2017.



PORT PLANNING HIGH SPEED FIBER BACKBONE FOR RIDGEFIELD

In this digital age, slow doesn’t cut it. Communities that can tout faster-than-typical Internet and data connection speeds have an edge over those that don’t. Ridgefield may be about to join the ranks of the “haves” in this category, with a new high-speed fiber backbone project by the Port under consideration.

“In seeking new ways to help our community and also provide a revenue stream for our Port, this appears to be a solid investment with a track record of good financial returns,” said Port Commissioner Scott Hughes.

network it competes with private enterprise.

“In fact, it helps fiber providers,” Holmberg said. “When they are at capacity, building new fiber infrastructure is costly; if they can lease from us they avoid a big capital outlay.”

On an educational mission to meet with Port of Whitman County officials in eastern Washington last summer, representatives of the Port of Ridgefield learned about Whitman County’s successful foray into fiber network construction and leasing. More meetings later, and with a lay of the local fiber landscape in hand, the Port of Ridgefield decided to look at the concept for Ridgefield.

The Port of Whitman County is enjoying healthy annualized returns of two to one for every dollar invested. For residents and the business community it’s even better: they experience faster data speeds than are typically available.

The Port is working with Outside Plant Maintenance LLC of Coeur D’Alene, Idaho in the early stages of developing the fiber design base maps and construction drawings. If deemed feasible, the estimated cost for this phase would be approximately \$220,000. Upon Commission approval, work will commence in the first quarter of 2016, and the first phase of construction would begin in spring or summer of 2016.

Nelson Holmberg, Port of Ridgefield’s vice president of innovation, has been working with Port of Whitman County officials on this project. He said there is a misconception that when a municipality constructs a fiber

2016 MAJOR PROJECTS & GOALS

WATERFRONT

- Conduct a feasibility study to better understand specific demand for Miller's Landing.
- Continued marketing
- Seek funding support for public amenities

WDFW BUILDING

- Complete negotiations with DES & WDFW
- Secure final permits
- Begin construction

RAIL OVERPASS WORK

- Secure final permits
- Go out for bid on construction

FIBER OPTIC PROJECT

- Design fiber base maps & construction drawings
- Begin fiber line construction

11TH STREET BUILDING

- Continue marketing efforts to secure tenant or buyer for 112,000 sq. ft. permitted building

LAKE RIVER HEALTH

- Seek federal funding and dredging permit from U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN UP (FORMER PACIFIC WOOD TREATING SITE)

- Work with Department of Ecology to develop final neighborhood clean-up strategy
- Complete DOE-directed remedy in study area originally designated for clean-up.



A BLUE PRINT FOR THE FUTURE

PORT COMMISSIONERS SHARE VISION

The last few years have been exciting for Ridgefield. Together we've made a lot of progress - including reopening our beautiful waterfront. But we can't rest on our laurels - there's more we can do to make Ridgefield the best community in the state.

As a Port Commissioner, my focus for the next few years will be in a couple of areas. First, we have to protect that which we've improved. The stretch of Lake River next to port property is clean and we need to keep it that way. I'll be taking the lead on making sure the water quality of Lake River is better understood and well-managed. Healthy waterways protect our environment including the shoreline wildlife and plants and the aquatic critters that inhabit it.

One very critical way to keep Lake River clean and safe for boaters is to

push for regular dredging by the US Army Corp of Engineers. The mouth of Lake River is slowly choking with sand. Dredging the mouth will allow more water to flow. It will improve water quality, fish habitat and boater safety. So one of the things I'll be working on this year will be to contact the Corps to bring the situation to their attention.



"...we have to protect that which we've improved."

Bruce Wiseman

My second priority for 2016 is education. Ridgefield's natural backyard and waterway ecosystem is one of the best classrooms available for learning about nature. I want to encourage our youth to understand the significance of protecting our environment for future generations. To this end I want to continue to build the relationship between the Port, Ridgefield School District, Clark College and WSU. Looking forward I see great things ahead.

Being a Port Commissioner has taught me a thing or two. But one thing I believed when I ran for the position the first time remains just as true today - and that is that we need to be open and accountable to the public. We encourage public involvement and are interested in what people think and want for their community. That's how we build the partnerships we need to do the things we do.



"I believe Ridgefield will just keep getting better."

Joe Melroy

Our community depends on the Port to be honest and open in everything we do. You can expect us to continue to uphold those values.

Ridgefield is headed into a period of economic development activity unlike anything we've seen. We have a lot of projects underway, and we'll keep you in the loop on those. With the rail overpass, fiber project, neighborhood remediation and more on our platter, we'll be busy, but we'll keep you

posted. One of the best ways you can get first-hand information is to come to our regular Port Commission meetings - I invite you to attend.

We'll also continue working with our community partners for the betterment of Ridgefield. For example, as the City

conducts its city-wide planning, the Port is working to secure development that reflects the vision and the plan. We will also work in concert with the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge to make trail connections and cohesive signage.

These kinds of partnerships are critical to leveraging resources and building community. I'll be working with my fellow commissioners and Port staff to ensure we are ready to meet the needs of a growing community.

Working with our partners and our community, I believe Ridgefield will just keep getting better.

Looking ahead, I feel bullish about Ridgefield's future. I love the can-do spirit of our community. I like the fact that the City, School District, U.S. Fish & Wildlife office and a host of other organizations are able to work together to serve the citizens of Ridgefield.



"I feel bullish about Ridgefield's future."

Scott Hughes

The possibilities and opportunities created by working together is exciting. One of my goals as a Port Commissioner is to see that the Port works with the community in mind. For me it's quality that matters. And quality begins with efficiency. The Port's lean organizational structure is designed to meet our many economic development goals and objectives. We have a team of well-qualified advisors available; we pay for their expertise only when we need it.

The fiber project referenced on page 1 is a project that, if successful, will give existing businesses

improved data speeds for greater productivity. We hope to attract other high-tech businesses and technology professionals to the Discovery Corridor. High speed connectivity is critically important to building a high-performance clean, vibrant economy.

We know regional growth is driving residential growth in Ridgefield. The Port Commission wants to see job growth keep pace. If we're successful our community will remain an affordable place to live and work.

In 2016 we'll continue working to build our local economy - to bring the jobs and tax base our community needs. I look forward to working with you, my fellow commissioners, Port staff and our partners to make it happen. We have a lot of work to do over the next few years. But we're well-equipped and off to a great start. With a lean organization, an eye on quality, and good partnerships, I say, LET'S GO!

LOOKING TO THE LEGISLATURE 2016

1 great region.
3 great ports.
ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES...

In late January the Port of Ridgefield will join the ports of Vancouver USA and Camas-Washougal in a series of meetings with state legislators from the region. The intent is to raise awareness of shared economic development priorities and showcase the economic potential of Southwest Washington.

At a meeting in December last year, commissioners and staff from all three ports met to discuss and confirm priorities. It was noted that the economic potential of SWW has state-wide significance. All three ports are working to redevelop large waterfront properties. The ability to bring these properties to economic use will create jobs and engaging public places on area waterfronts. Freight mobility, congestion relief and rail safety, as well as financing tools, are among the many shared needs of the ports.

The legislative priorities of the three ports are not necessarily funding requests. In many cases the ports are simply looking to inform state legislators on issues that affect ports and the communities they serve.

The Port of Ridgefield is specifically interested in each legislator's stance on the use of public-private partnerships to finance projects. Another topic of interest for the Port of Ridgefield is gaining design-build authority for Washington ports. This authority would allow ports to create a team of architects, engineers and construction specialists prior to designing the building. Once formed, the team would work together to design, engineer and build the project. The process has been shown to reduce conflicts and project costs, and speed project delivery.

2015 BIG ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RAIL OVERPASS

Secured \$10M required to complete the last phase of the Rail Overpass Project, which will provide safe passage between downtown Ridgefield and the waterfront.

WDFW BUILDING

In a competitive Request for Proposal process, the Port was the "apparent successful proposer" for an \$8M building on S. 11th Street to house the regional WDFW headquarters. (See article page 1.)

3 PORTS PARTNERSHIP

Collaborated with the ports of Camas-Washougal and Vancouver USA in an international public/private partnership conference.

INVESTMENT CASE WITH CITY

The Port worked with the City of Ridgefield in a discovery process to understand the investment case for Ridgefield. (See article page 4.)

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP

Working under the direction of the Washington Department of Ecology, Port contractors conducted soil sampling to test for dioxin levels in a small area just east of the Port's waterfront property. Elevated levels may have been caused by wood treating activities conducted by a tenant on Port property many years ago. Affected home owners have been notified; DOE will establish specific remediation plans, where applicable.

ACQUIRED S. 11TH STREET PROPERTY

The Port purchased two adjoining parcels totaling 10.5 acres of industrial land at S. 11th Street. This acquisition allowed the Port to respond to the WDFW Request for Proposals. (See article page 1.)

PERMITTED S. 11TH STREET BUILDING

The Port planned and permitted a 112,000 square foot building on Port-owned property on the north side of S. 11th Street. Site readiness will greatly reduce construction timelines for a future tenant or buyer.

Hired INNOVATION VP

The Port took a pro-active approach to fostering productive partnerships and expanding business development by creating and filling the position of Vice President of Innovation. (See articles on pages 1 and 4.)



MORE GROWTH AHEAD

BY BRENT GRENING, CEO

2016 looks like it's going to be a big year for Ridgefield and north county. Rapid residential home construction will continue. More people here will create more demand for retailers and opportunities for other job providers. Will 2016 be the year when Ridgefield gets a grocery store? I wouldn't bet against it. Ridgefield is poised for retail investment and we'll see job-rich development continue too.

Much of what's in store for Ridgefield will result from growth in the Portland Metro area. As Portland grows, we too will grow. In addition, as lease rates in Seattle match those in San Francisco, we expect more companies and people seeking an affordable Northwest address to put Ridgefield on their list. I expect all of Clark County to experience strong growth for the next five to six years. Ridgefield, in the path of accelerating urban demand, is in line to become the next regional hub in the Metro economy.

As a community, we have been planning and positioning ourselves as best we can to prepare for and manage this growth cycle. Installation of our new wastewater system, road and intersection improvements and even land use and comprehensive planning have been made with an eye to economic trends that will impact greater Ridgefield.

To be sure, challenges and opportunities will abound in a growth environment. As a publicly-owned entity, our role is clear. We will work with all of you to build a strong, livable community. Working together is a Ridgefield tradition and the secret to our success as a community.

As 2016 moves out of the starting blocks, the tradition rolls on. We look forward to working with the community to bring our projects to life. Here's to a healthy, prosperous year for all of us.

PORT LISTENS & LEARNS

VP OF INNOVATION SEEKS INSIGHTS, IDEAS

Entering into a period of major transition, the Port of Ridgefield is moving forward with thoughtful, community-minded development projects. Port leaders are firm in a commitment that their work should align with the Port's three-pronged goal of being fiscally-responsible, environmentally-friendly, and of benefit to the Ridgefield community.

Not content with limiting economic development activity to brick and mortar construction projects, of which there are many in the works, Port representatives set out last year to find new ways of thinking and new ways of doing.

"The status quo is not enough in this day and age of fast-paced global commerce, technological advancements and a highly-competitive world marketplace," said the Port's CEO, Brent Grening.

Grening believes the Port has both an opportunity and a responsibility to help the community set itself apart from its competitors. He espouses the Port's role as a "thought leader," and charges himself and his staff to come up with new partnerships, ideas and approaches to solving problems and expanding employment and business opportunities for the current and growing number of Ridgefield residents.

New Staff Position Propels Port Forward

A key ingredient in the Port's efforts to incorporate out-of-the-box thinking as a daily discipline was the establishment last year of a new staff position – vice president of innovation. The Port's hiring choice, longtime Clark County resident Nelson Holmberg, was the Port's pick.

Holmberg's first order of business was to embark on 30 interviews encompassing various Ridgefield stakeholder groups, with the goals of gaining insights into public perception of the Port's activities, understanding of what else citizens would like to see the Port embark upon, and to scout for new ideas from outside the Port realm.

"If the Port staff and Commission look only to each other for inspiration, we limit ourselves," Holmberg said. "My job is to keep an ear out for fresh ideas, explore new partnerships, and look for areas in which the Port can improve."

Who Was Interviewed?

Holmberg completed his round of interviews late last year. There was no magic to selecting the people to be interviewed; it was a process of brainstorming with Port staff to develop a good cross-section of Ridgefield stakeholders from both inside and outside Ridgefield.

"We came up with a list of folks that provided me with a good representative sampling of many community groups including business leaders, Little League and soccer club parents, retired folks, developers, community leaders, employers and more," said Holmberg.

Holmberg added that this first slate of interviews will not be his last. "This wasn't a one-hit wonder," he said. "I'd like to continue this process at least annually with different people in order to understand community-thinking, listen to what people have to say, and to keep the Port in the loop and current."

What Came Out of These Interviews?

As the interview process came to a close in December, Holmberg was gratified to find the views about the Port were not disparate. Across all spectrums of interviewees, most were supportive of the Port and its activities; many were also excited about what's happening in Ridgefield and at the Port.

"There is a great deal of continuity in thought, and people are more curious than critical," Holmberg said.

Several stakeholders wanted to know when the Port is going to purchase the waterfront marina (it has no plans to do so), and someone in the development world expressed interest in partnering with the Port on a development project.

"We appreciate those votes of confidence for the Port," said Holmberg.

Another idea that came forth from Holmberg's interviews was the concept of a business incubator, in which new businesses get a start in facilities with lower-than-market rent. The intriguing twist put forth by the business leader with whom he spoke was to construct the incubator with cast-off shipping containers that can be inexpensively procured.

Holmberg noted that developers, businesses and individuals are constructing many creative live or work projects with containers. "It isn't an outlandish thought," he said.

In addition to ideas and insights on Port-related subjects, Holmberg was pleased to find people are very interested in other Ridgefield developments in the works. He noted that Clark College coming to Ridgefield and the potential for a Peace Health facility are exciting to those with whom he spoke.

"Folks seem to understand that Ridgefield has a great deal of ground available and they aren't afraid of these kinds of community additions," Holmberg said.

A Hotel in Ridgefield?

In speaking to a hotel developer with no ties to Ridgefield, Holmberg inquired as to why, as Ridgefield sports the label "fastest growing city in Washington," that it doesn't appeal to hotel developers?

Holmberg noted the man's answer was interesting; he pointed out there is too much hotel capacity at Salmon Creek but offered an alternative.

"He said he wouldn't touch hotel development at the Ridgefield junction, but suggested a boutique hotel on the waterfront was a different discussion."

Next Steps

Holmberg said he found value in everything that came from these interviews. Now it's time for the Port Commission to hear what he learned. At the Feb.10 Port Commission meeting, Holmberg will present his findings and the ideas that came from his interviews to the commission.

"Part of our commitment to the community is providing thought leadership," said Holmberg. "We want to give appropriate consideration to all ideas we hear and establish which may be feasible."

Have an idea you think the Port should hear? Holmberg invites you to contact him. Call (360) 887-3873 or email Nholmberg@portridgefield.org. Or, hear Holmberg's presentation by attending the Feb. 10 Port Commission meeting, to be held at 3:p.m. at the Port office.



"If the Port staff and Commission look only to each other for inspiration, we limit ourselves."

Nelson Holmberg
Vice President of Innovation



MAKING THE INVESTMENT CASE FOR RIDGEFIELD

With Ridgefield's population growing and with it the need for additional goods and services, the Port and City of Ridgefield have been working together to attract quality retail and commercial development.

Through interviews with developers and investors, a picture emerged that helped the two agencies understand the needs and interests

of this audience. Utilizing what was discovered, the City and Port recently co-produced an informational piece that speaks directly to the investment potential of Ridgefield and the Discovery Corridor.

Printed versions are available at Ridgefield City Hall and the Port offices, or visit the Port's Home Page at www.portridgefield.org to view an online version.