

INSIDE



FIRST THINGS FIRST



HAVE A BUSINESS IDEA?



THE NEW GUY!

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111 West Division St,
Ridgefield, WA 98642
360.887.3873
portridgefield.org

A CASE STUDY IN COOPERATION



PORT, CITY WORK TOGETHER TO LAND GROCER, REAP COMMUNITY BENEFITS

The Port of Ridgefield recently approved the sale of a piece of port-owned property in Ridgefield for the development of a Rosauers Supermarket, a regional grocery store based in Spokane. The grocer was recruited to the area through the efforts of the City and Port of Ridgefield. Pictured is a rendering of the Rosauers store planned for the Ridgefield site.

For most Ridgefield residents, it's no longer news that the community is going to soon see a regional grocery store, to be located at 45th and Pioneer streets. With Spokane-based Rosauers Supermarket slated to open its full-service doors in 2019 on a portion of the Discovery Ridge property sold by the Port of Ridgefield for the store's development, citizens will soon realize a long-expressed wish.

What folks might not know is why and how this came to be, who helped make it happen, and an understanding of the myriad benefits beyond easy access to expanded grocery offerings this project will bring Ridgefield citizens. It's more than a story about a grocery store – another critical chapter in the tale is that the city, port and community worked together to meet a

community need.

But first, to gain an understanding of the interest level the project announcement generated, a look at the port's Facebook traffic when the story was posted to its page revealed a lot.

"When we saw that within two days the post had reached almost 20,000 people and had been shared 167 times, we were truly stunned," said port CEO Brent Grening, who noted no other post has seen even a third of that volume of organic activity.

"The community identified what it wanted, and the city and port went out and got it."

**Brent Grening,
CEO, Port of Ridgefield**

So what's the big deal about a grocery store?

What is the fuss about a grocery store in Ridgefield? There are, after all, two small markets in Ridgefield, and supermarkets in Battleground and Salmon Creek. Generally the answer from citizens boils down to product selection and

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PORT WORK EARNS GOV'S SIGNATURE

BROADBAND LEGISLATION TO BENEFIT RIDGEFIELD, ALL RURAL AREAS IN STATE

At press time it was anticipated that very soon, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee will sign Substitute House Bill 2664 into law, moving citizens and businesses in the Discovery Corridor one step closer to seeing high-speed broadband service. The broadly supported, bipartisan bill will give all Washington state port authorities the ability to develop open-access broadband infrastructure for lease to any interested service provider, serving to increase speed and capacity, and to lower prices for users.

"Limited broadband service has put our business community and educational institutions at a competitive disadvantage," said Port of Ridgefield Vice President, Innovation Nelson Holmberg.

Previous legislation only allowed ports in "rural" areas to develop broadband infrastructure, due to a reality that for-profit internet companies were not inclined to make

extensive capital outlays to serve a small number of people. Ridgefield and other small Washington communities with proximity to a major-metropolitan area were not defined as rural under the former legislation.

Over the last couple of years, Holmberg has been working with other ports in the state, along with Washington Public Ports Association, to secure new legislation by seeking the support of state senators, representatives and private service providers.

Port of Ridgefield CEO Brent Grening believes broadband is the last piece of modern infrastructure needed in the Discovery Corridor.

"We have all the other pieces of important community infrastructure in place – roads, improved junction, great schools, expanded water and sewer capacity – this is the last piece necessary to ensure our community has the infrastructure for a 21st century economy."

Grening praised Holmberg for his efforts in securing this legislation.

"We greatly value the participation of other ports, but Nelson clearly took a leadership position, and was instrumental in achieving a goal that will strengthen the economic health of our community and many other communities in our state," Grening said.

Holmberg noted there will not be an increase in the port tax to do this project, nor is the port requesting an appropriation from the state's capital budget.

"This money is coming from larger pots of money designated for exactly this kind of project."

For more information about the Port of Ridgefield's broadband infrastructure project contact Nelson Holmberg by emailing NHolmberg@portridgefield.org, call (360)887-3873 or follow the port's Twitter feed (@portridgefield).



FIRST THINGS FIRST

BY SCOTT HUGHES
PORT COMMISSIONER

It's true – Ridgefield is finally getting a full-service grocery store. The interest in this project has been astounding. A larger community might have yawned. But to most people here this is the best news they've had in years! No more freeway trips to get the week's groceries, more food variety, more organic options, lower prices – all good.

The behind-the-scenes story, however, could be viewed as even better news. It's that your port and city worked hand-in-hand on this project to make it happen. With the community's interest in mind, the city spent money and time recruiting a grocer that is community-minded and offers well-priced goods.

And the port? Admittedly, when the city approached us about this project we were skeptical. The Discovery Ridge property where the grocery store will go was slated for "bigger things" by the Port Commission – like high-tech employers, a health care campus or research facility that would bring high-quality jobs with higher-than-average wages to Ridgefield. At first glance, it wasn't obvious that trading a grocery store for these goals made sense.

Then we did our homework. We learned that the absence of a grocery store in Ridgefield was actually hampering efforts to bring quality jobs to Ridgefield and the Discovery Corridor. Why? Because high-quality employers want to locate where there are urban services, because that's what attracts high-quality employees. So, first things first, we concluded. A grocery store was the right thing at this time.

So with the full support of the city, and knowing the community was clamoring for a full-scale grocery store, the port commission voted unanimously to sell the property.

As you should expect from your public bodies, your city and port came together to help the community get what it wants. Now that's a recipe for community success.

GROCERY, CONT. FROM PAGE 1

pricing, and a desire to avoid driving on I-5 to get their groceries.

Folks have been talking about the need for a full-service grocery store for a long time. For example, due to citizen's voicing their wishes, the port's Fall 2014 newsletter included an article that attempted to help locals understand why they didn't yet have a full-sized grocery store. Population and income were cited as factors in store location decisions by real estate experts. Ridgefield had, and still has, a desirable higher-than-average household income. But in 2014, the city didn't have the population numbers to justify a large-scale grocery store. Now, it has reached the population tipping point to entice grocers, but getting the right grocer for the community is where the rest of the story comes into play.

Citizen demand spurred city to recruit a quality store

Demand for retail services was clearly identified in the City of Ridgefield's 2015 subarea planning work. The outcome of this effort resulted in zoning at 45th and Pioneer that incorporates a mix of uses, including community retail, campus/office, multi-family housing, flexible and employment zoning. The vision for this subarea as identified by community and business input emphasized a grocery-anchored retail center at one corner of the three currently undeveloped roundabout quadrants.

Steve Stuart, City Manager for Ridgefield, acknowledged that for about two years, due to this significant citizen demand, the city has been working with a national retail recruiting firm to actively search for services, including a grocery store that's right for Ridgefield.

"We knew there was more than enough demand for a grocer in Ridgefield, but instead of waiting for whatever was going to come, our City Council pushed for active pursuit of the kind of quality grocer our residents want and deserve," Stuart said. "We're really excited to bring Rosauers to Ridgefield, because they're a strong regional grocer with quality products and service that are a great fit here."

Stuart went on to add that Rosauers possesses attributes important in building Ridgefield's future.

"Rosauers is a regional company with a Northwest flavor and a history of good corporate citizenship. We're pleased to welcome a company to

Ridgefield that appreciates and invests in the communities in which it serves."

Business demand also played a role

Ridgefield Mayor Ron Onslow said employee surveys conducted by area businesses revealed that employee satisfaction is lower as a result of the long distance to things they need, including groceries, dry cleaning and pharmacy supplies. And that spent away from work is a worry for their bosses. "Employers have told us they lose productivity because their employees have to leave the area for important services, taking more time away from their jobs than if services were close by," Onslow said.

Port moves to support city, community and business needs

When the city recruited Rosauers and was helping them find a site, Rosauers zeroed in on the port's Discovery Ridge property as being best situated for their needs. Meanwhile, Ridgefield resident and developer Dean Maldonado had been courting the port to develop a retail center at the same location. Thus, a marriage of minds came into being: Maldonado would be the developer for the grocery store if the port would sell the property for that purpose.

Thus, the port's commissioners found themselves in a quandary. Retail development hadn't been the port's longtime vision for the site; their goal had long been for a corporate campus or technology center at Discovery Ridge. The grocery-anchored retail center demand changed all that.

Port Commissioner Scott Hughes said he and the other port commissioners did some serious soul-searching before making the decision to sell the property.

"We asked ourselves that if, by facilitating this project via a property sale, could we improve the community's ability to attract technology businesses and other kinds of companies that pay high-wage jobs – and decided in this case – yes, we could."

"Rosauers is awesome! We had one when I lived in Hood River!"
K. S.

"I always shopped there when I lived in Spokane. Great store."
E. D. G.

"When we lived in Kalispell, MT, that was where we did our grocery shopping. Wow!..."
M. R.

"WOW!"
D. B. W.

"Exciting news!! Can't wait!"
S. B. H.

For more information about the Rosauers project, visit portridgefield.org.

Grening believes this project will act as a catalyst to bring more high-quality employers to Ridgefield, validating the port's decision to sell its property.

Rosauers brings more benefits than meets the eye

Beyond significantly shortening the time residents spend on the household grocery run, the list of community benefits stack up considerably. With the property sold by the port on the tax rolls after project development, there will be \$11 million dollars in new assessed value added to the local tax coffers when the store is complete, and total of \$20 million by the end of Phase 1; property owners will see their portion of school bond taxes and port levy assessment go down, road improvements required for the project will improve current traffic flow, and Ridgefield schools will see more tax revenue.

Additionally, the City of Ridgefield will gain sales tax revenue from all non-food sales made at the store, bringing in more money to city coffers for community-related services. And finally, assuming performance by the developer, the port will sell all but seven acres at Discovery Ridge, and will see an increase in the value of those seven acres as the project goes to completion, offering a higher return for the public when the port develops that parcel.

Grening believes the Rosauers development exemplifies the productive and positive relationship between the city and the port, which works to get the community what it needs.

"The community identified what it wanted, and the city and port went out and got it," Grening said.

"We did our homework, we found a piece of ground, we found the right grocery store, we found a local developer, and we found capital to fund the project. This is a recipe for community success."



SPOTLIGHT ON START-UPS

Ridgefield residents Candice and Charles Swatzell launched their mobile event childcare business with a plan to gain market share and sell the business when the time is right.

OWNERS AND THEIR BUSINESS ARE ON THE GO!

When Ridgefield newcomer Candice Swatzell quit her teaching job and moved with her family to Southwest Washington, she found that sitting didn't suit her. Not long after landing in Vancouver about five years ago, she put her energy to work on a new business idea – one that utilized her experience in education and her love of children.

Working with partners, including a person who is an expert in military contracting, and Candice's husband, Charles Swatzell who has a strong business background, the group launched a mobile childcare business to serve U.S. military needs, corporate events and even weddings and other smaller events. Google is a regular on their client list. Parents attend a day-long or multi-day event, and their kids can accompany them and be cared for during conference or event times.

It works like this: They send carefully-screened, contracted daycare workers stationed around the country to the designated event site, deliver an inventory of items to the site such as floor mats, bookshelves and books, games and toys and more – all to make a hotel conference room or other space designated look and feel like a top-quality day care center. Parents attending events find their children in a room staffed with knowledgeable care providers who not only foster a safe and caring environment for kids, but also offer educational and just-for-fun programs to keep anywhere from 10 to 200 kids engaged all day.

About two years ago, the business served only two states. Frustrated with the slow pace of business growth, the Swatzells bought out their partners and renamed the business On the Go Mobile Event Childcare. Since then, On the Go has ramped up to serve 30 states with 55 skilled care providers at-the-ready. It's an exhausting pace for the couple, who have three children of their own.

"We travel a lot. I'll get on a plane, then pick up a trailer at one of our inventory sites and drive it to the event location. It's typical for us to have six events per weekend, scattered around the country," Candice said.

While Candice, who is On the Go's CEO, doesn't travel to all of the events, she does have to worry about them all. Realizing she needed to find some balance or quit the business,

she recently hired a young man from the community as office manager.

"He's so great. He prepares proposals, manages the logistics, and sometimes travels with us to help out," Candice said, leaving her to spend her time training her care providers and developing new programs.

Charles, who serves as the company's chief operating officer as well as being involved in a variety of other business and start-up organizational endeavors in the area, believes consistency in service is the key to On the Go's success, which has grown completely organically through word-of-mouth from client to client.

"Other companies have missed the basics, pushing bells and whistles when they don't have the fundamentals down. Our clients can count on us for worry-free, safe, child care," he said.

While the hours they've put in on the business have been brutal, the duo had a clear plan from the start to cash in on their hard work.

"We are essentially a logistic business that attached good business practice to childcare," said Charles. "With the lion's share of the market due to our consistency of service, we've built something that's scalable and saleable as a package in the future."

For more information about On the Go Mobile Event Childcare visit onthehochildcare.com.

HAVE A BUSINESS IDEA?

Organizers bill Techstars StartUp Weekend Vancouver April 6-8 as "Your idea in 54 hours." For local budding entrepreneurs, what does that mean, exactly?

According to its website, StartUp Weekend Vancouver is "the place to look for a team, create a prototype of your idea, validate your business idea, and receive feedback

STARTUP WEEKEND IS APRIL 6-8

from experienced entrepreneurs, all in one weekend."

Sound too good to be true? It's not. Just ask port CEO Brent Grening, who participated in the event last year in order to get a feel for what the all-volunteer organized event offered, and to find out if it could be an effective resource to help grow Discovery Corridor business innovators. The event exceeded his expectations.

"It was amazing! It was incredibly fast-paced, but everyone was engaged and energized. The team I was assigned to came away with a business idea that when fully-launched, will help ports all around the region through a for-profit business model," Grening said.

"I can highly recommend participation."

Participants are encouraged to bring "lots of energy," and to be prepared to pitch a new, not previously worked on idea, or listen to the ideas of others. Participants will also vote on the most interesting ideas and form teams with diverse skill sets to flesh out chosen ideas.

Advance registration and payment for the event is required. StartUp Weekend begins at 5 p.m. on Friday April 6, and ends at 9 p.m. April 8.

The lead volunteer organizer for this event is Dave Barcos of The Bridge Incubator in Vancouver. Sponsors include COLAB Coworking, Cloudability, LocalFund and the Port of Ridgefield.

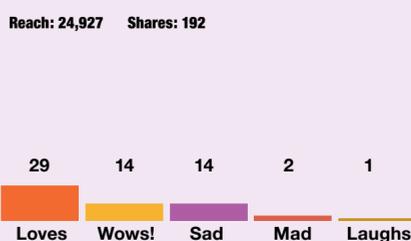
Tickets are \$15 to \$99, depending on level of participation. For event details and to purchase tickets visit bit.ly/swvanwa2018.com.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE NEW GROCER

MANY COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- More money for city services
- Faster repayment of school bond and port levies
- Greater return to public when port develops its remaining Discovery Ridge acres
- No I-5 drive for groceries
- Greater product selection
- Lower prices
- More organic options

FACEBOOK RESPONSES AS OF MARCH 15





ON THE LEVEL

Are we ready?

BY BRENT GRENING, CEO

Our regional economy is humming in many sectors. The most prosperous sectors, such as high-tech, education, health care and other knowledge-based industries hum in the Portland-Metro Area. These industries fuel the global economy.

So how can we ensure that Ridgefield and the Discovery Corridor are positioned to retain, grow and attract companies like these? Do we have the right environment and tools to entice these kinds of businesses and the talent necessary to work in these industries – industries that bring higher-paying, environmentally-clean jobs? Are we ready?

We think the answer is: Almost, but not quite.

With our outstanding school district, a top educational research facility in WSU – Vancouver, a progressive, excellence-focused partner in Clark College, an effective working relationship between the city and Port of Ridgefield, we have a great deal. But what's missing?

We continue the drum beat that we need modern infrastructure to build a modern community – one that's attractive to the kinds of businesses mentioned above. Whether these businesses are mature or start-ups, we need to serve up the ability for these businesses to connect to the regional economy. Our clogged highways put a kink in our ability to connect, as does the absence of high-speed data transfer capacity. Today, to be competitive globally, information needs to move at the speed of light – and in the Discovery Corridor – it doesn't yet.

To ensure our community and its people can flourish economically, our port will continue its effort to secure funding to develop broadband infrastructure. We will also continue encouraging our state and federal leadership to make progress on a Columbia River Bridge replacement to reduce the I-5 congestion that prevents Clark County from being a predictable drive from downtown Portland and all points north and south.

Why? Because "almost" isn't good enough to compete today. We must be ready.

Matt Rosenberger recently joined the port as its new accounting manager. He replaces Jeanette Ludka, who's retiring after 22 years in that position. (See related article, below).

Rosenberger brings nearly 25 years of experience in all-things-accounting to the role, as well as a reputation for longevity in his employment; he was 18 years with his previous employer, Mr. Formal, holding the position of company controller his last 13 years there. When Mr. Formal's owner decided to retire, Rosenberger helped wind down the company.

"I received the last paycheck ever issued by the original Mr. Formal," said Rosenberger.

Prior to Mr. Formal, Rosenberger was employed for five years as an auditor for the Washington State Department of Revenue.

"I gained experience from the government side of things, which proved very useful when performing accounting for the private sector," he said.

When his work for Mr. Formal came to an end, Rosenberger needed a job. "When I read the port job description, I saw it as moving full-circle back to the public sector, but instead of auditing I would be helping people in a good way," he said with a laugh, adding he plans on the port being the last place he works.

"I'm in it for the long haul, for as long as they want me!"

Rosenberger's early years were spent in Underwood, Washington, but in 5th grade his father took a job with Aramco, which brought the family to Ras Tanura, a compound in Saudi Arabia that served as the home for the families of the oil company's many employees stationed there. He later moved back to the states, settling with his mom in Vancouver. He attended Evergreen High School for his junior and senior years.

The experience in Saudi Arabia left Rosenberger with friends all around the globe. A group connected with him via Facebook about 25 years after he left the Middle Eastern town of Ras Tanura, and now they meet every two years.

Avid golfers, Rosenberger and his wife, Jennifer, purchased a house on the golf course in Battle Ground recently.

"We played on the course all the time, and joked about buying that house if it ever came on the market....and it did, so we bought it!"

Brent Grening, CEO for the port, while impressed with the many talented people who applied for the position, was especially impressed with Rosenberger, who, he believes, brings a broader set of skills to the job.

"We have a small staff, so adding Matt, who has higher-level skills, brings us increased capacity and greater depth – something very helpful to the port."

Rosenberger attended Clark College for two years. He earned his accounting degree from Western Washington University.

NEW ACCOUNTING MANAGER BRINGS EXPERIENCE, JOB STABILITY



LUDKA LEAVING ACCOUNTING MANAGER RETIRES IN APRIL



As she heads into retirement in early April, the port's longtime accounting manager is leaving a daily routine that for 22 years has included working with numbers, and then – more numbers. While Jeanette Ludka has always known the day would come when she would no longer work here, departing the port comes with sadness and some trepidation.

"I've loved working here, and I enjoy everyone who works here; they are great people and I'll miss them," she said wistfully.

When she started her career at the port, Ludka worked as a bookkeeper under the direct supervision of the port's then- director of finance. Ten years into the job, the director position was eliminated, and Ludka took on all the finance duties under the title of accounting manager.

"I had lots of jobs before I started with the port," Ludka said, "but this one stuck."

Ludka's retirement life isn't fully jelled yet, but she has aspirations to start a business selling items she makes with her craft skills, including needlepoint, crochet, beading and knitting. Beyond that, she and her husband don't have too many big plans.

"We will work on our house, and maybe do more travel by car," she said.

Port CEO Brent Grening came to the port around the same time as Ludka. Her work, he said, has been extremely valuable to the port.

"Jeanette has been a wonderful and trusted steward of public funds. We will miss her greatly."

Until she leaves, Ludka will work with the new accounting manager, Matt Rosenberger, (see related article above) to ensure a smooth transition of duties.

NEW TICKET MACHINE INSTALLED AT PORT PARKING FACILITY

The port recently installed a new ticket machine at the port's marina parking area. The move is for the convenience of the many users who wish to pay day use fees with a credit card.

"We hear from people that they aren't often carrying cash in this day and age, so we wanted to make it easier for people to pay the fee, which supports the maintenance of our facilities," said Laurie Olin, the port's vice president of operations.

The ticket machine will accept both debit and all credit cards, including American Express. It is, however, unable to process a ticket purchase with cash. Annual use passes are not available with the new machine.

The \$8 day use fee remains unchanged with the installation of the new ticket machine. For information about purchasing an annual pass, visit the recreation page on the port's website, or contact the port by calling (360) 887-3873.

