

FALL 2017

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

INSIDE



NEW RETAIL-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT



START-UPS



BIRDFEST & BLUEGRASS

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PORT READIES FOR PLACEMAKING AT DISCOVERY RIDGE

Port of Ridgefield is moving into the planning stage for Discovery Ridge, the port's 30-acre parcel at the southeast corner of 45th and Pioneer streets near the roundabout. Here, port commissioners Joe Melroy, Scott Hughes and Bruce Wiseman survey the freshly-mowed site.



Casual passers-by traveling on Pioneer near the roundabout at 45th Street may not be aware that the sweeping, tidy field that hugs the southeast side of this state route is Port of Ridgefield-owned property, long ago named Discovery Ridge. Recently dotted with late summer-harvested hay bales, the 30-acre site is ripe for near-term development. With the port's recent completion of the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife regional headquarters building, coupled with current demand, the port is shifting focus and available resources to Discovery Ridge.

Situated at a key crossroad near ever-expanding housing and along a route that's seeing significant traffic increases due to the opening of the ilani Resort,

port officials are working on a plan behind their vision that will set the tone for quality development and its long-term community benefits.

What Constitutes Quality?

Port CEO Brent Grening and the port commissioners have been noodling on development concepts for years. They view the quality of development as something more than putting a stone façade on a newly-constructed building. While looks matter to port officials, they are also spending time learning about quality development in terms of functionality – how it works, performs and flows – the vibe or feeling of a place, and what it takes to attract people for business or pleasure.

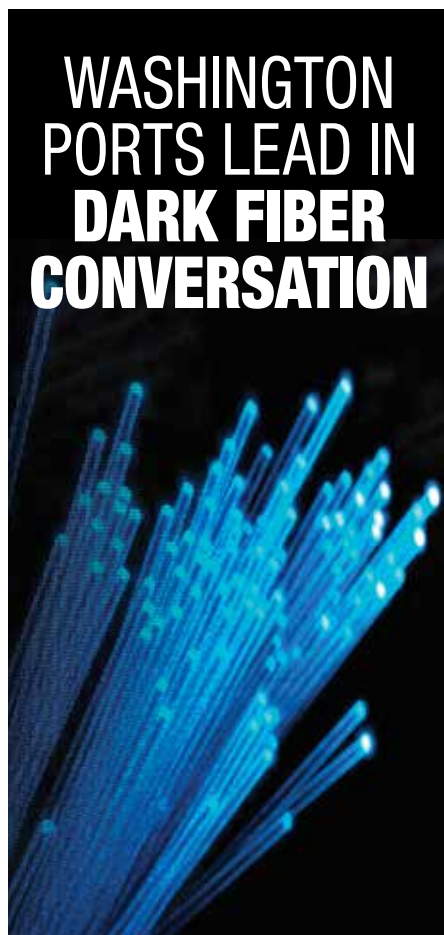
"We need to consider design and efficiency. **PLACEMAKING, PAGE 2**

In its work to establish a dark fiber infrastructure that will provide high-speed internet and data capacity to the Discovery Corridor, Port of Ridgefield representatives are leading the charge to bring other Washington State ports into the conversation to address the broadband needs of communities across the state.

To date, port leaders have called for and co-hosted two broadband summits – the most recent was held in late July. The summits, with nearly three dozen port representatives in attendance at each, were co-hosted by the ports of Ridgefield, Skagit and Whitman County. The two, half-day, programs held in Seattle provided attendees with education and information about the community benefits of port-developed broadband infrastructure, various economic models for port-owned dark fiber optics, and legislative priorities to modernize the opportunity to develop this infrastructure.

"The collective voice of a large number of Washington ports working together to seek financially-feasible ways to develop this infrastructure is

WASHINGTON PORTS LEAD IN DARK FIBER CONVERSATION



a more effective voice," said Nelson Holmberg, vice president, innovation for the Port of Ridgefield.

At the summits, attendees also heard from panelists who shared the stories of the need for broadband by their constituencies, rural ports who are already in the dark fiber business, economic development agencies, education and research leaders, as well as representatives from the Washington Public Ports Association and the Washington Public Utility Districts Association in regards to their own current authorities and legislation.

"We've made great progress in communicating that we are simply working to build infrastructure that can be leased from us and operated privately. It is a model that truly creates access to a market that service providers aren't yet reaching due to the lack of infrastructure investment," Holmberg said.

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

OPPORTUNITY LOCATION LIFESTYLE VISION OPPORTUNITY LOCATION LIFESTYLE



THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

BY BRUCE WISEMAN, COMMISSIONER

Recently, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee spent a morning in Ridgefield. On that bright summer day our community got the chance to shine.

The governor stood on the banks of the now clean and beautiful Ridgefield waterfront where he could see the fruits of many successful port partnerships, including with the City of Ridgefield and the state. We also told Governor Inslee about the port's productive partnerships with the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife, the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Clark Regional Wastewater District, our fellow ports in the county and in the state, and our fantastic and supportive school district. Our successful partnership with the community was evidenced by the positive voices of the many people who turned out that day.

“This is a great secret sauce going on right here.”

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee

We also updated the governor on the final phase of our Pioneer Street Rail Overpass project – a project that has been made possible because of high-quality community partnerships.

In short, the story we told Governor Inslee was one of the power of partnerships in enhancing our community. In return, he told us this:

“If you want to look for a place where people are building new technologies; creating new kinds of jobs at the same time they are creating great places to raise a family – like right here in Ridgefield. This is a great secret sauce going on right here.”

Our partnerships are critical in getting things done. So expect to see the port enter into more of them in the future, because our commission believes that the products of our partnerships – whether they are with the public sector or the private sector – are good for people, our environment, and business. We need to support all of these elements to make a great community.

PLACEMAKING, FROM PG 1

Does it sit easy on the environment? Does it reflect authentic Ridgefield? All those elements need to be answered,” Grening says.

He also noted that local flavor in the way of breweries, wineries, baked goods and restaurants are critical amenities for a community, serving to create a sense of place for existing residents, and drawing new talent to serve the business community or to be part of the high-tech or start-up scene.

“If we want tech, we need talent,” Grening says. “If we want talent, we need ‘place.’”

Studies Support Placemaking

Grening's assertions are borne out in many studies, including Place Value, a 2015 study from Community Builders, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping local leaders create more livable communities. The study draws on survey results from nearly 1,000 business owners and community members in four Rocky Mountain states: Colorado, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

A summary statement from Community Builders about the study says that “Both business owners and community members overwhelmingly value community quality above other relevant factors, like salary or tax structure, when choosing a place to live or start a business.”

Community Builders further suggested that communities will benefit from expanding their economic development toolbox to include approaches focused on creating great places where people want to live and work. To read the full report visit: [Community Builders.org/PlaceValue](http://CommunityBuilders.org/PlaceValue).

Subarea Planning Plays a Role

“With the port's emphasis on job creation, our early plans for Discovery Ridge were for a corporate campus,” said port CEO Brent Grening. “But with community input from subarea planning work, we are expanding our view of what constitutes successful development there.”

With a great deal of citizen input, the City of Ridgefield undertook a multi-month subarea planning process in 2015 that focused on three key areas in Ridgefield: 45th and Pioneer Crossing; the Junction, and the Downtown Waterfront area. Port representatives worked closely with the city on the 45th and Pioneer and Downtown/Waterfront subarea planning work as it affected the port's properties at these two locations.

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 input emphasizes a grocery-anchored retail center at one corner of the three currently undeveloped roundabout quadrants.

But regardless of what comes to this particular corner of Ridgefield, it's important to the future of the community, and port commissioners want to get it right.

“People are telling us they want amenities and services, and they want them to be really attractive and reflect Ridgefield,” says Bruce Wiseman, port commission chair.

Quality Control Rests with the Port

Grening says the most-likely scenario is a developer or investor will purchase some or all of the Discovery Ridge acreage. Control over quality, therefore, lies in pre-work for the site and in selection of the

developer. Using architectural design guidelines and covenants, codes and restrictions commonly used in a new subdivision, the port can control design, use, landscaping and other criteria for the entire site.

“For the good of Ridgefield, Grening says, “we will not trade on quality.”

Members of the City Council and the Port Commission, along with their respective staffs, have toured a variety of projects in other communities, an effort Grening feels has been very rewarding.

“These field trips are invaluable, because we can see, walk and experience actual development while talking about what works and what doesn't. We will continue to work with the City of Ridgefield as we move through these early stages of designing Discovery Ridge.”

“If we want tech, we need talent. If we want talent, we need ‘place.’”

**Brent Grening
CEO, Port of Ridgefield**



The Port of Ridgefield's Discovery Ridge property is readying for future development. The site is marked here by the flag; view is from south to north.

What About the Waterfront?

At a recent port commission meeting, a resident asked what was happening with the port's waterfront property. Understanding there is curiosity related to the waterfront, Grening knows some may wonder why the port will be putting its resources first to Discovery Ridge, instead of its 41-acre waterfront property, Millers' Landing. The answer is clear to him.

“Current interest in commercial development is near the Junction and 45th and Pioneer,” Grening says. “When the Pioneer Rail Overpass is completed in 2018, we expect interest in the waterfront to increase. Safe access and flow between downtown and the waterfront area will be critical to any project there.”

He also believes quality development at Discovery

Ridge will be a catalyst for development elsewhere.

“An attractive and people-enticing place at Discovery Ridge will elicit more interest in the waterfront,” says Grening. “To move the waterfront forward, we believe we first have to move Discovery Ridge forward.”

“People are telling us they want amenities and services, and they want them to be really attractive and reflect Ridgefield.”

**Bruce Wiseman
Commission Chair, Port of Ridgefield**

BREAKING NEWS

At press time on Oct. 11, the port anticipated entering into formal negotiations with local developer Dean Maldonado to bring a retail-centered development to Discovery Ridge. For the latest news, follow us on Facebook or Twitter.



“To foster a climate for start-ups, we need to help them go from garage to global.”

Brent Grening
CEO, Port of Ridgefield

SPOTLIGHT ON START-UPS

Port of Ridgefield representatives hold a core belief that communities that foster a welcoming climate for business start-ups will enjoy more dynamic economic growth. To bring more attention to the potential of Discovery Corridor start-ups and to support them in their efforts, the Port of Ridgefield’s quarterly newsletter will begin featuring businesses and organizations that are either high-impact start-ups or whose services support start-up enterprises. The article below is the first in this new feature, Spotlight on Start-Ups.

LOCAL.FUND IT DOES JUST THAT!

There’s a growing start-up culture in Clark County and it’s beginning to achieve critical mass, says entrepreneur and Clark County resident John Laine.

A “think-outside-the-box” kind of guy, Laine has built a support mechanism for nurturing these emerging and growing businesses via Local.Fund Inc., an “angel” investment company. His path to establishing this business was a tumultuous one.

In 2001, given an early-demise sentence by his doctors due to a serious medical condition, Laine made a purposeful commitment to live life more fully. So in that same year, the then lightly-educated Laine jumped into entrepreneurial waters by launching a real estate investment company that grew to \$77 million in assets. But like many in the real estate business at the time, his firm crashed hard in the Great Recession of 2008-09.

“The ‘School of Hard Knocks,’” says the good-natured Laine, “gave me a great education.”

So two years ago, armed with knowledge and a clean bill of health, Laine embarked on Local.Fund.

His investment company’s approach is to get behind early-stage

businesses that aren’t bankable in the traditional sense, have a reoccurring revenue stream, and are led by people he believes in.

In return for a small cash infusion and mentorship, Local.Fund typically takes a 15 percent equity stake in the business. Then, he and his associates assist and support these businesses or “portfolio partners” in areas outside the expertise of the owner to help get them to success or to the next level of funding – a mutually-beneficial strategy that lends itself to friendships along the way.

“We spend a lot of time with our Local.Fund partners. These are people who are really passionate about their businesses – they become family.”

Additionally, with the equity stake as a motivator, Local.Fund and its investors have a vested interest in the success of their partner businesses. In addition to funding, investors and involved businesses look to each other for needed services, making an effort to keep dollars within the circle of the portfolio partners.

“If they win, we win,” Laine says.

Laine’s formula seems to be working. Since launching Local.Fund he’s thus far attracted 35 investors who’ve seen returns on their investment starting at nearly 60 percent, and invested \$202,000 in 14 Clark County enterprises, adding 21 new local jobs. Laine can also identify \$1.4 million in economic benefit to Clark County from the multiplier effect brought about by the jobs and business growth.

Local.Fund investors commit

anywhere from \$2,500 to \$25,000 to help provide a financial hand to local businesses. As for the businesses, they include a broad spectrum – from massage therapy and video production to clothing lines, a social media company and even a small commercial building.

Laine says the ideal size of a company targeted for investment has annual revenues of around \$100,000 to \$125,000, and has been in business for a couple of years.

“We’re taking a bigger risk than a bank does, so we look for reasonable owner equity. We want to know they have some skin in the game.”

For Laine, who seems to be having a good time along the way, the ultimate goal of Local.Fund is much bigger than meets the eye. He has a vision that by investing locally in small business, he can help to fundamentally shift wealth from the top 1 percent, back down to the bottom 99 percent, making wealth accessible to more than an entitled few.

“I hope, through Local.Fund, Inc., that we can put more money back into the pockets of the little guy.”

For more information about investing or becoming a partner business, visit www.Local.Fund, email john@local.fund or call (503) 490-5889.

This article is intended for informational purposes only. The inclusion of a business or organization in Spotlight on Start-Ups does not imply endorsement or support for it, or for its products or services, by the Port of Ridgefield.



ON THE LEVEL

Keeping things moving...

BY BRENT GRENING, CEO

With increased activity in Ridgefield, Southwest Washington and the entire metro area, keeping things moving has become a big challenge and is a high priority for our community. Commuters into Vancouver or Portland are painfully aware of increasing congestion. Today's traffic counts are greater than predicted; the problem is growing faster than anticipated.

The good news is that our regional economy is humming. So ensuring people can continue to move about easily is important to our community's economic health. People are going to work, which brings congestion, which lowers our productivity. So you'll begin to hear more about a new discussion of an I-5 bridge and a suite of improvements that will keep the I-5 corridor flowing.

Vehicle traffic isn't the only congestion that's on the port's mind this fall. We're also still pressing for greater broadband connectivity. Large portions of our district lack the bandwidth necessary to conduct business from here. If you can't access the bandwidth to work locally, you are forced to join the thousands of people who must commute to make a living.

An open access, community-owned broadband infrastructure – which will allow people to connect in order to launch a data-driven business or to work from home – must be part of our transportation solution. Simply put, we need to move more data and fewer cars, because the infrastructure cost to move data is much less than that to move vehicles.

So as we look forward to the 2018 legislative session, the port will focus on two pieces of critical community infrastructure: One, improving I-5, the major artery that connects us to Portland, the economic heart of our region; and two, gaining the authority to build a fiber optic network to allow people to spend less time on the road.

2017 BIRDFEST & BLUEGRASS

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge held its 18th annual Birdfest & Bluegrass event on October 6, 7 and 8. This three-day event celebrates the return of migrating waterfowl to the Refuge. Here we've featured some of this year's photo contest winners.



Photos provided by Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. The event is sponsored by Ridgefield's Pro Photo Supply, which requires that all photos must have been taken within areas of the Refuge open during publicly-accessible hours.

Clockwise from top left: 1st place Douglas Beall; youth 1st place Abby Orth; honorable mention Dennis Davenport; honorable mention Mark Butler; honorable mention Kevin Koch; 3rd place Gary Davenport; youth 2nd place Jacob Afflerbaugh; honorable mention Dennis Davenport.

THE BIRDS ARE BACK! TIME TO WALK THE WATERFRONT

