



# **COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME OF HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS**

**Adopted September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

## PORT COMMISSIONERS

- COMMISSIONER SCOTT HUGHES
- COMMISSIONER JOE MELROY
- COMMISSIONER BRUCE WISEMAN

## PORT STAFF

- RANDY MUELLER, CEO
- ETHAN PERRY, DEPUTY PORT DIRECTOR
- WILLIAM ELING, GENERAL LEGAL COUNSEL

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
MISSION STATEMENT.....	5
VISION .....	5
ROLE OF THE PORT .....	5
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS.....	5
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STRATEGIES .....	6
<b>CHAPTER 2: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</b> .....	<b>7</b>
INVENTORY OF PORT REAL ESTATE ASSETS .....	7
RIDGEFIELD WATERFRONT PROPERTY .....	8
RIDGEFIELD INDUSTRIAL PARK PROPERTIES.....	10
WDFW REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FACILITY .....	11
WISDOM RIDGE BUSINESS PARK .....	12
GREELY BUILDING.....	13
HEIN PROPERTY .....	14
<b>CHAPTER 3: THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN</b> .....	<b>15</b>
PROJECT LIST.....	15
<b>APPENDIX A: PORT DISTRICT MAP</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: RIDGEFIELD WATERFRONT MAP</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: WINE INDUSTRY SUPPORT</b> .....	<b>19</b>

## **PREFACE**

---

This plan updates and supersedes the Port's previous Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements.

Under Washington State law, the Port of Ridgefield is required to prepare a comprehensive plan, formally known as a "Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements". For ease of use the term "Comprehensive Plan" is also used throughout this document when referring to the Port of Ridgefield's Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements.

The purpose of this comprehensive plan is to guide the port management and inform the public regarding the expenditure of public funds on planned improvements to the port's properties and facilities.

Washington State law requires that port comprehensive plans provide the following items:

- (1) an inventory of the port's assets as to its properties and facilities,
- (2) a description of the recommended development of these assets, and
- (3) an implementation plan, detailing how the development of the port's assets will occur over time.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

---

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Port of Ridgefield's mission is to responsibly develop land and facilities that encourage private investment, job creation and local economic diversity and stability in order to preserve and better the quality of life for citizens of the greater Ridgefield area.*

**What we do:** responsibly develop land and facilities that encourage private investment, job creation and local economic diversity and stability.

**Why we do it:** to preserve and better the quality of life for citizens of the greater Ridgefield area.

## VISION

Our shared vision is for our communities to be recognized for their livability, healthy environment, and contributions to a robust local economy. Our communities want to be vibrant, clean, safe, enjoyable and productive places where citizens work together to manage the implications of their social, economic and environmental actions so as to not compromise the ability of future generations to do the same.

## ROLE OF THE PORT

The development contemplated within this plan is designed to allow the community to broaden its tax base and spread the cost of public services. The Port promotes employment-based development to reduce the tax-rate and taxes paid by individual homeowners. Employers typically pay more in property taxes than they use in public services. This is one of the ways that having a healthy business community helps lower the tax burden and make public services more affordable.

However, as our communities evolve, several ongoing discussions will continue regarding the appropriate type, size, and location of employment-based development. As the lead economic development agency in North Clark County, the Port of Ridgefield will be at the forefront of these discussions.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS

To fully realize the Port's mission, the Port Commission and management team have defined the following planning objectives:

1. Develop properties that encourage private sector investment and new job creation.
2. Stabilize and strengthen the area's economy by diversifying the local employment base.
3. Determine the highest and best uses for the Port's existing lands.

4. Identify prime employment opportunities that will provide for the long-term economic health of the Port and the greater communities of the Port District.
5. Stimulate new private investments and seek out those interested in partnerships with the Port.
6. Promote the attraction and location of high-wage, value-added jobs.

The core business of the Port is to develop, lease and/or sell land and buildings to employers to increase the number and quality of local jobs. In addition, the Commission and management team have also set the following business objectives:

1. Grow the Port into a self-sustaining operation with annual revenues that exceed expenses.
2. Manage financial risks associated with Port investments.

Finally, the following goals can be used to gauge the Port's performance in pursuit of its mission:

1. An ongoing program of commercial and industrial building development is implemented.
2. Financial stability of the Port is improved by ensuring that:
  - a. Annual earned income is greater than expenses;
  - b. Port operations are funded by earned income rather than tax revenue;
  - c. Sufficient cash reserves as detailed in the adopted financial policies is maintained.
3. A safe, publicly accessible Ridgefield waterfront is developed.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING STRATEGIES**

To accomplish the port's goals, over the next 5 years the port will plan to:

- ❑ Develop commercial and industrial properties along the I-5 corridor, the NE 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor, and elsewhere around the entire Port District.
- ❑ Rebuild the Ridgefield Waterfront property as a mixed-use waterfront with public access and amenities.
- ❑ Develop key properties in downtown Ridgefield consistent with the community's vision, preserving the unique character that makes downtown special while enhancing livability and improving economic vitality.

The timing of projects meeting these goals will depend largely on the Port's ability to fund them, market demand, availability of property for port acquisition and development, and future direction from the port commission.

## **CHAPTER 2: THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

---

### **INVENTORY OF PORT REAL ESTATE ASSETS**

The Port of Ridgefield currently owns the following properties:

- Ridgefield Waterfront property
- WDFW Regional Headquarters facility
- Wisdom Ridge Business Park
- Ridgefield Industrial Park properties
- Greely Building

The proposed development strategies for each of these properties are discussed below as individual comprehensive plan elements.

## RIDGEFIELD WATERFRONT PROPERTY



The Port owns approximately 40 acres of waterfront property generally located along Lake River in Ridgefield. The property is zoned for waterfront mixed use development under Ridgefield Development Code Chapter 18.30. Approximately one-half acre in the southwest corner of the site is dedicated to permanent use as a public boat launch. Another half-acre area is located to the east, on the opposite side of the BNSF railroad and along Railroad Avenue.

The property was the site of a major environmental cleanup effort. In 1963, the Port leased a portion of its Lake River property to Pacific Wood Treating Company (PWT). For 30 years, PWT's mill produced treated logs and was the Port district's largest employer. In 1985, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required PWT to begin cleaning the property of environmental contamination and in 1993, PWT declared bankruptcy and ceased its operations at the Lake River property. PWT left the Lake River property of the Port severely contaminated with pentachlorophenol, creosote, and copper-chromium-arsenate. In 1995, the Port and Washington State Department of Ecology reached an agreement to begin cleaning the site, and this work was completed in 2017.

The site has been the traditional employment center for Ridgefield. The Ridgefield waterfront remains the only public working waterfront in North Clark County; this plan continues that tradition. However, new jobs will need to reflect a new sense of wise use and environmental stewardship.

The site is surrounded by over 10,000 acres of natural lands. The natural areas extend from Woodland and La Center to the north, south to Vancouver Lake, east across the Columbia River to



Sauvie Island and encompass the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. The Ridgefield waterfront is the nearest public waterfront & access to the Columbia River for the ever-expanding numbers of people living in North Clark County. Therefore, in addition to the jobs to be created on site, the site must also be able to accommodate large numbers of visitors & users.

Of the approximately 40 port-owned acres, more than 25% is designated for public recreational spaces and activities (see Appendix B). A new Waterfront Park will be constructed, in partnership with other organizations, generally located in the area between the existing hard-surface trail and the shoreline.

The Community Boat Launch will be maintained within its existing footprint and improved as resources allow, to better serve the local Ridgefield community.

In-water improvements will be made in Lake River state-owned aquatic lands, as resources allow. These will include docks offering additional transient (short-term) moorage, public safety facilities, and unpowered watercraft launching facilities. The port will pursue a Port Management Agreement with the Department of Natural Resources.

The areas of the waterfront upland of the hard surface trail have been designated for mixed-use development by the port. These areas of the site can attract and accommodate a variety of users and business opportunities to Ridgefield, meeting the port's primary purpose and mission of creating positive economic activity. Improvements will also include enhanced public parking facilities accommodating multiple user groups.

## RIDGEFIELD INDUSTRIAL PARK PROPERTIES



In 1984, the Port of Ridgefield purchased 78 acres of property in the southwest quadrant of the I-5 freeway and Pioneer Street interchange and began development of an industrial park. The Port has now sold all the large developable parcels of industrial land in the industrial park to a variety of individual businesses.

The Port still retains ownership of certain remaining parcels of land in the industrial park. Parcels 986033596, 986033601, 986033602, 213985000 and 214066000 contain stormwater facilities, which the port may continue to operate or may transfer to the City of Ridgefield.

Parcel # 986033600 is approximately 6.47 acres in size, and may be sold, leased, or developed by the port.

Parcel # 986033597 is approximately 2.44 acres in size, and may be sold, leased, or developed by the port.

## WDFW REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FACILITY



In 2017, the Port of Ridgefield constructed 31,000 square feet of buildings at 5525 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street in the Ridgefield Industrial Park. This facility is currently leased to the State of Washington and serves as the Regional Headquarters of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. It is anticipated that the building is to remain a leased asset of the port.



## WISDOM RIDGE BUSINESS PARK



In 2021, the Port of Ridgefield constructed two 21,000 square foot industrial buildings at 5645 South 11<sup>th</sup> Street in the Ridgefield Industrial Park. These two buildings are currently leased by the port to multiple tenants and are anticipated to remain leased assets of the port.

## GREELY BUILDING

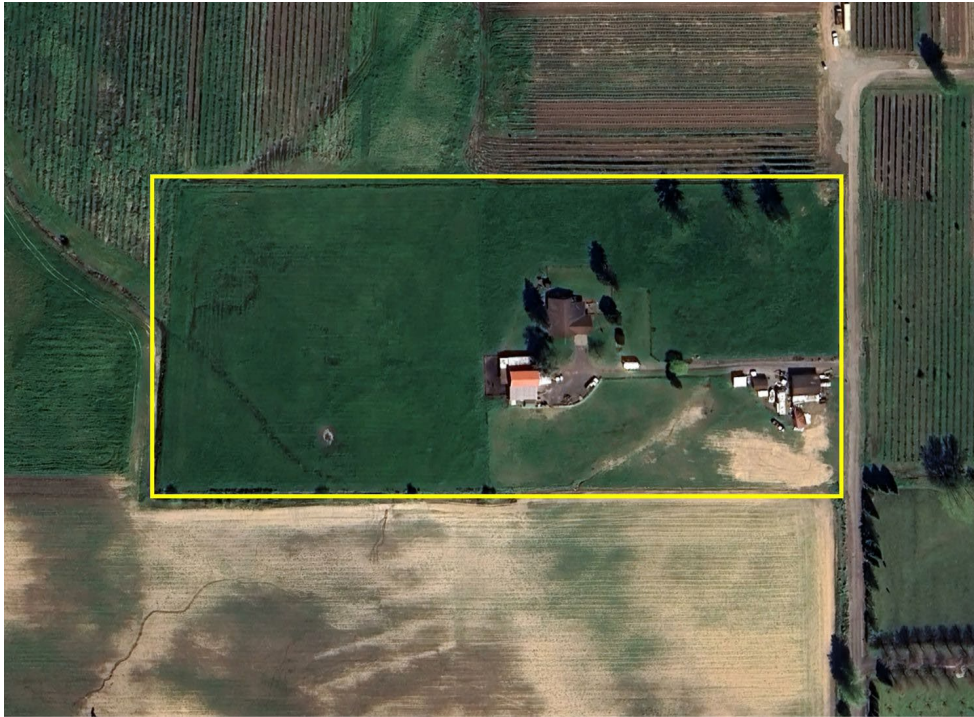


This property consists of a 9,024 SF brick building on two parcels totaling .33 acres, located at 304 Pioneer Street in downtown Ridgefield.

The port acquired this property from the Ridgefield School District. The port is working to perform all necessary environmental remediation work and then renovate the property for use as community and leasable space. This property is anticipated to remain a permanent asset of the port.



## HEIN PROPERTY



This property consists of two parcels totaling 10 acres, located at 75 North 78<sup>th</sup> Place in Ridgefield.

The port acquired this property from Mr. Gerald Hein. The property is zoned for light industrial uses, and the port plans to develop the property by itself or as part of a larger industrial development including adjacent properties. This property could remain a leased asset of the port, or could be sold to a future user or developer.

## CHAPTER 3: THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

---

The Implementation Plan identifies the list of elements that are important steps toward carrying out the Comprehensive Plan and may identify additional factors that need to be considered such as timing, problems to be encountered, and financial aspects that factor into the implementation. The annual Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) for the Port is prepared by Port staff. The CFP is a document separate from this Comprehensive Plan. The Port staff are guided by this Comprehensive Plan as part of the process to update the Port's CFP.

### PROJECT LIST

The following is a listing of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations. The timing of the implementation of these projects will depend largely on the Port's ability to fund these development recommendations, market demand and when additional property becomes available for Port acquisition and development. Projects may take place sequentially or concurrently.

- 1. Redevelop the Ridgefield Waterfront** with a mix of uses, and make improvements to the waterfront park, waterfront trails, and shoreline enhancements along Lake River. Those mixed uses may include employment, office, retail, civic, cultural, recreational, and residential uses. Improve connections to and enhance the downtown. Specific elements may include:

**Rebuild the Waterfront.** Improvements include demolition, grading, complete streets, utility work, parking facilities, docks, fire district facilities, sheriffs marine patrol facilities, EV charging, and brownfield mitigation.

**Creation of a new Waterfront Park.** Improvements include the planning and construction of a Waterfront Park and accessory infrastructure.

**Improve the Community Boat Launch.** Enhance the existing powered boat launch within its current footprint, in order to better serve Ridgefield residents.

**Construct Port Waterfront Building One.** Improvements include the planning and construction of a multistory mixed-use public facility building with office, retail, and community spaces.

**Construct enhancements to public spaces.** Improvements include street and parking improvements, a Railroad Avenue parking facility and railroad pedestrian bridge, EV charging, and park improvements.

As the required capital investment to develop the Ridgefield Waterfront will greatly exceed the port's financial capacity, the port will need to seek out private and public investment and/or create partnerships to expedite a phased development.

- 2. Construct and/or acquire properties throughout the entire port district** that can be developed to provide new employment opportunities and additional economic activity for the community.

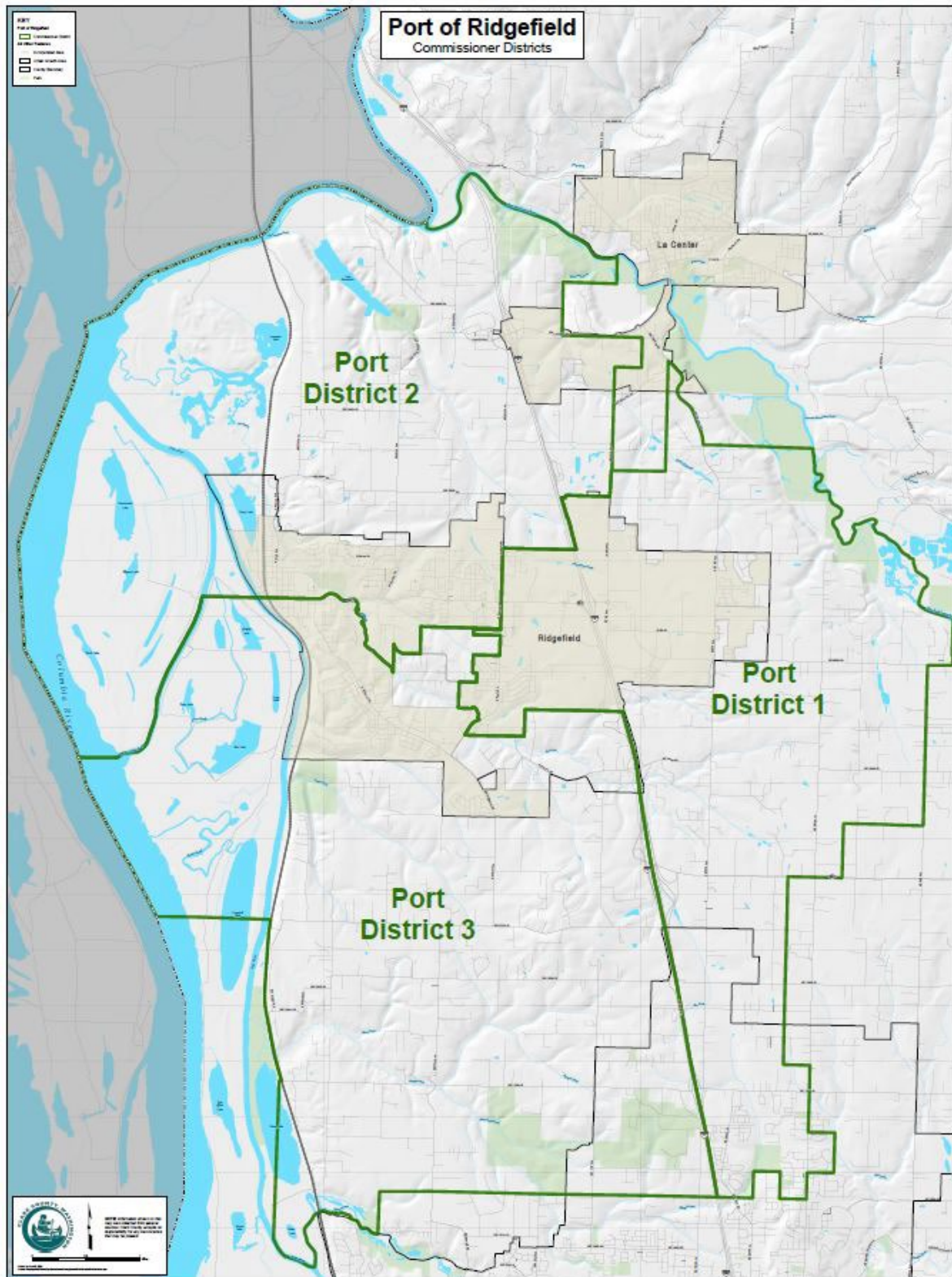
**Construction, Renovation, and Restoration at the Greely Building.** Improvements include building renovation and/or restoration, new construction, and environmental cleanup.

**Construction of business facilities in the City of Ridgefield.** Improvements include site acquisition, streets, utilities, public facility construction, parking, and terminal facilities.

**Construction of 179<sup>th</sup>/219<sup>th</sup> interchange area business facilities.** Improvements include site acquisition, streets, utilities, public facility construction, parking, and terminal facilities near or between the 179<sup>th</sup> Street and 219<sup>th</sup> Street interchanges of Interstate 5.



# APPENDIX A: PORT DISTRICT MAP



# APPENDIX B: RIDGEFIELD WATERFRONT MAP



The acreage amounts shown above are approximate. The port may, through agreements with other landowners and developers, change or expand the acreages of these designations provided that there is no net loss of employment land area.

## **APPENDIX C: WINE INDUSTRY SUPPORT**

---

The wine industry continues to grow in the State of Washington, and an expanding wine industry operates in the Port district. These businesses would benefit from port involvement and support in the following three project categories:

1. Capital projects such as the purchase of wine making equipment and facilities, incubators, education facilities, and wine industrial/retail parks.
2. Marketing efforts promoting the local wine industry. These efforts may include coordination of regional wine-related advertising efforts, and the production of local winery maps, marketing studies, and special events.
3. Regulatory assistance directed at improving the regulatory environment for wine businesses. This assistance could include the pursuit of establishing a local American Viticultural Area (AVA) and working with other public agencies to establish streamlined procedures and consistent city and county regulations, including zoning regulations, which are compatible with the wine industry.

The positive economic development impacts of a growing local wine industry are consistent both with the goals of the Port of Ridgefield and with the statutory purpose of the district. Wine production creates primary employment opportunities and promotes economic activity in winemaking and agriculture. Likewise, job opportunities are created in secondary and supporting business including but not limited to retail sales at tasting rooms and tourist related jobs at area restaurants, shops, and other recreational attractions. Indirect economic development effects include services used by the wine industry such as construction, skilled trades, advertising, legal, accounting, entertainment, and other fields.

A flourishing local wine industry reflects positively on our community and associates the district with a lifestyle attribute which many believe attracts investors and entrepreneurs looking to relocate existing businesses or start new business enterprises that are unrelated to the wine industry.

Support of the further development of the wine industry in the Port district by pursuing the three project categories is consistent with the Port of Ridgefield statutory purpose and stated goals and is consistent with the port's overall mission.