



# PORT OF BENTON Press Release

**June 28, 2021**

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## **Prosser and Richland Airports Receive Federal Grants for Improvements and Expansion; Prosser Airport Campground to Close**

**Richland, Wash.** – Port of Benton has received \$855,747 in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to make substantial safety improvements at Richland Airport and make way for additional hanger sites at Prosser Airport (George O. Beardsley Field).

To participate in the FAA Airport Improvement Program, the Port must identify the projects in the airports master plans. At its June 16 meeting, the Port of Benton Commission accepted FAA grant funds and awarded the following projects:

- Lighting design and construction (Richland, \$254,893)
- Construction of additional taxiway to serve new hanger sites (Prosser, \$600,854)

The Prosser Airport Master Plan was updated in 2019, and the Richland Airport Master Plan update is currently underway to identify potential projects and amenities for the future. Community input is an essential part of this process, and the feedback received was focused on providing for airport safety and increased area for aeronautical activities. The plan must also consider existing barriers to grant assurance compliance and highest and best use of future expansion areas.

Construction will begin this summer at Prosser airport and continue in 2022 at Richland Airport. In preparation for the taxiway project at the Prosser Airport, an informal campground there will be permanently closed beginning July 9, 2021. This closure will make way for nine additional hanger sites and remove decaying trees. While the Port will miss providing camping to local pilots, the Port looks forward to additional based aircraft and pilots that will be accommodated in the new hangar sites. Alternative accommodations may be found at [www.airnav.com](http://www.airnav.com).

Previous updates to the Richland and Prosser Airports as a result of the Airport Improvement Program federal grants include:

- Airport runway lighting updates
- Demolition of end-of-life hangers and other structures
- Airfield pavement rehabilitation, crack seal/fog seal

The Prosser Airport is also seeking FAA Airport Improvement Program grant money to fund helipads in 2025 to provide an area for cherry-drying helicopters to park. Cherry drying is a vital resource for local agriculture, protecting over \$40 million in local crops.

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