



*"It is the mission of the Port of Benton to manage our **public assets** and make **strategic investments** to be a catalyst for **regional economic growth and prosperity.**"*



Port of Benton Strategic Plan

2020-2030





To our Community, Tenants and Partners,

The Commission and Staff of the Port of Benton are pleased to present our **Strategic Plan 2020-2030**:

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH REGIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

This Strategic Plan and the accompanying 2021 Annual Action Plan are guiding us in building an organization that will thrive in serving the economic development needs of our community. The Port's Team, your team, of Commissioners and staff is dedicated to listening, understanding and being responsive to the needs of our customers, taxpayers, and business community to achieve this goal. We are investing in your Team to embolden each staff member's full potential as they engage their skills and knowledge in addressing the challenges of an ever-changing economic environment.

The following Strategic Plan was developed as a direct result of your Team's input, interviews with tenants, as well as our community leadership partners. We faced unique challenges developing this guidance under a global health pandemic that required we gather input in various non-traditional methods such as video meetings, electronic surveys, one-on-one interviews, and small group meetings. In future updates we hope to utilize these methods to engage a wider audience and reintroduce in-person facilitated conversations that provide even more intriguing and candid conversations.

Our Mission matters in the lives of our community members every day, and we are focused on generating enduring positive impacts to those individuals. Our connections with industry and our partners inspire us to forge ahead in exploring sustainable energy solutions, value added agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and innovation in entrepreneurship.

At the same time, we are mindful of our commitment to diversity and equity by ensuring openness and transparency as we pursue our goals.

The global health pandemic continues to loom and will likely result in varying forms of socioeconomic unrest and uncertainty about the future. Your Port Team remains confident about that future as we invest in facility and grounds, promote the region, and continue to build partnerships.

We are committed to our Mission in serving our District and the region.

Planning is essential to keep focus and produce results. I want to thank your dedicated Port Team for their commitment to the success of the Port of Benton and desire to leave a positive legacy of dedication to service. Critical to that legacy is the unwavering leadership of our Commission.

We are optimistic about our future and it is a privilege to serve our district!

Thank you,

Diahann C. Howard, PPM®
Executive Director

*"If everyone is moving forward together, then
success takes care of itself"*

- Henry Ford

Acknowledgements

Special Thanks to Participating Community Leadership Partners that provided input to the Strategic Plan:



Commissioners



Jane F. Hagarty



Roy Keck



Robert D. Larson



Diahann Howard, PPM®
Executive Director of
the Port of Benton

Diahann Howard was named the Port's Executive Director in December 2019. Previous to this appointment, she served as the Port's Director of Economic Development and Governmental Affairs beginning in 2006. Prior to

joining the Port, Diahann served as the Economic Development Manager for the City of Richland. During her fourteen years at the Port her work has resulted in over \$15.3 million of grant and legislative funding; examples include \$5m to support the Wine Science Center at WSU Tri-Cities, \$5.4m to complete Delta High School, \$2.2m and \$1.5m for rail bridge improvements.

Diahann has also served as the Executive Director for the Tri-Cities Research District (2007-2020), the Richland Rotary Club president (2017-2018) and was named Rotarian of the year for 2011-2012. In October of 2018, she was appointed to the U.S. Department of Energy

Environmental Management Advisory Board. In September 2019, Diahann was awarded a Professional Port Manager (PPM®) certification from the American Association of Ports Authorities. She is also active in the community, serving on the boards of United Way, Visit Tri-Cities and the Tri Cities Legislative Council.

Diahann is a Tri-Cities native and holds her Bachelor of Science degree in International Affairs from Eastern Washington University. She is the first woman to hold the Port of Benton executive director position, and she is the first executive director with Latina heritage among the 75 port districts within Washington State.



History of the Port

The Port of Benton was established in 1958 as a special purpose district under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Title 53. It was chartered to “promote industrial development and transportation, including general aviation, in Benton County.” The Port was created following the transfer of ownership of Richland from the US Army Corps of Engineers to the citizens. Previously, the City of Richland was the property of the federal government as part of a World War II secret mission called the Manhattan Project. The property that was originally designated as the Port’s district was 290 acres known as Camp Hanford. The land was transferred from the US Army Corps of Engineers to the Port in 1959. Today, that property is known as the Technology and Business Campus in Richland.

1958

Port of Benton Established: Voters approved the new Port District in November 1958. Port of Benton became the 46th port in Washington.

1959

Technology & Business Campus Established: The Port began to develop the 290-acre site (formerly called the Richland Industrial Park) north of Richland City limits as its first property to support economic development.

1961

Prosser Airport Obtained: The City of Prosser transferred the Prosser Airport, formerly the George O. Beardsley Field, to the Port.

1961

Richland Airport Acquired: The federal government transferred the Richland Airport, formerly Atomic Energy Field, to the Port.

1963

Prosser Wine & Food Park Created: The Port acquired 70 acres in Prosser and established the Prosser Industrial Park, later called the Prosser Wine & Food Park, to attract value-added ag industries.

1965

Port of Benton Designated a Nuclear Port: The U.S. Coast Guard declaration allows the Port to handle nuclear waste, spent fuel and other radioactive materials transported by truck, rail, air or water.

1970

Richland Industrial Park Multipurpose Building Finished: The Port completed construction of the multipurpose facility, designed to house small-scale manufacturing, storage facilities, offices and laboratories.

1972

Barge Unloading Facility Completed: The Port’s dock and barge facility is leased to the U.S. Navy and supports offloading or onloading of decommissioned reactor compartments and other water-borne cargo.



Historic Photo of the Uptown Shopping Center



Historic Photo of the Prosser Airport



Richland Barge Slip Under Construction



1975

Benton City Industrial Park Created: The Port purchased 26 acres in Benton City to boost public and private-sector commercial development.

1985

Port Business Incubator Building Opened: The Port's incubator building helps launch small businesses and industries and is known today as the Applied Process Engineering Laboratory (APEL) in Richland.

1988

Prosser Incubator Building Opened: The Port opened its second incubator building at the Prosser Airport, which housed the Chukar Cherry Company until the company relocated to a new facility on the Airport property in 2019.

1989

Second Incubator Building Opened in Prosser: The Port completed the construction of an incubator building at the Prosser Industrial Park.

1996

Hanford 3000 Area Transferred to Port: With this transfer by the U.S. Department of Energy, Port of Benton became the first U.S. port to acquire surplus 71.5 acres of government property under the 1994 Defense Authorization Act to diversify the local economy.

1998

Hanford 1100 Area Surplus Land Allocated to Port: The 760-acre transfer from the U.S. Department of Energy included a major warehouse, short line rail and railroad facilities to support local industries in reaching markets across the Pacific Northwest.

2000

Vintner's Village Site Purchased: The Port purchased 32 acres in Prosser near its Wine & Food Park for a bonded warehouse for local wineries, which became Vintner's Village in 2003 – a collocated winery and retail business park.

2006

Port Honored as Port of the Year: Washington Public Ports Association awarded Port of Benton as its "Port of the Year" in part for its economic development efforts, including Vintner's Village, Crow Butte Park and a biomass gasification project.

2007

Crow Butte Park Transferred to Port: The Corps of Engineers transferred a 20-year lease for the park to the Port after Washington state was unable to continue operations due to budget constraints.

2007

Innovation Partnership Zone Designated: Washington state designated the combined Richland Innovation Center and Technology & Business Campus as an Innovation Partnership Zone today known as the Tri-Cities Research District.

2008

Port Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary: For five decades and counting, the Port continues to focus on developing projects and adding public amenities that enhance the local economy and quality of life.



Walter Clore Center Pavilion



USS Triton Sail Park



Crow Butte Park

History of the Port

2009

Construction Begins on USS Triton Sail Park: The Port is creating a dramatic new landmark within the Technology & Business Campus as it begins work on the USS Triton Submarine Sail Memorial Park.

2010

Benton City Building Purchased and Renovated: The Port purchased a nearly century-old building in downtown Benton City and converted it to retail space to serve residents and visitors.

2011

Vineyard Pavilion Dedicated: The first building at the Walter Clore Wine & Culinary Center site, the Vineyard Pavilion, was erected and dedicated on June 30, 2011.

2011

Technology Enterprise Center Purchased: The Port purchased the Technology Enterprise Center, formerly the Tri-Cities Enterprise Center, and began remodeling the building and improving the parking lots.

2011

USS Triton Sail Park Dedicated: To honor former military personnel working at Hanford, the Port worked with the Navy to relocate the decommissioned USS Triton submarine's sail and conning tower to north Richland. The Port's sail park is the only place in the U.S. with a sail, conning tower and periscope from a war sub on display.

2012

Wine Science Center Land Donated: The Port provided three acres of land to Washington State University Tri-Cities for a Wine Science Center.

2013

Launch of Tri-Cities Start-Up Weekend: The Port and Tri-Cities Research District became the signature sponsors of Tri-Cities Start-Up Weekend, which is now known as Launch University.

2014

Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center Constructed: The Port managed the construction of the Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center, which is a collaboration between the Port, Washington State, Prosser Economic Development Association, the Walter Clore Board of Directors and the private sector.

2014

Crow Butte Park Upgraded: New amenities added include a restroom, 12 new boat slips and a fish cleaning station.

2014

New Hangars Built at Richland Airport: The Port completed seven new hangars for lease, including a T-hangar that will house 11 planes.

2015

Port Negotiates Its Largest Land Sale: Port Commissioners approved a 128-acre sale of land at the Port's Manufacturing Mall (now Richland Business Park) in Richland.

2015

City and Port Earn Business Recruitment of the Year Award: The Washington Economic Development Association selected the City of Richland and Port of Benton for its 2014 Business Recruitment of the Year award. The partners recruited the largest cold storage facility in North America to the Horn Rapids Business & Industrial Park and the Ste. Michelle Wine Estates WSU Wine Science Center to the Technology & Business Campus on the WSU Tri-Cities campus using a local revitalization financing program.

2015

Former Hanford Land Transferred to Port: TRIDEC completed a land transfer of 760 acres to the Port, called North Horn Rapids, to support clean energy manufacturing.

2016

Port Honored With Outstanding Job Creator Award: The Washington Public Ports Association announced the Port as its Outstanding Job Creator of the year. The award recognized the Port's efforts to expand technology and engineering sector jobs.

2017

Boat Slips Added at Crow Butte Park: Twelve additional boat slips were added at the Crow Butte Park marina, which has become an increasingly popular destination for camping, boating, fishing and for families who want to get away for a day trip.

2017

**Richland Airport
Infrastructure Improvements**

Completed: To expand capacity and rehabilitate the pavement on runways, taxi lanes and aprons, the Port completed infrastructure improvements at its Richland Airport.

2018

Vintner's Village Expanded:

The Port finished phase two of development at Vintner's Village in Prosser, including 21 new lots and a Development Building on 25 acres at the Prosser wine park, designed to attract boutique businesses and additional wineries.

2018

**Port Selected for Project
of the Year Award:**

The Washington Airport Management Association chose the Port as the recipient of its Project of the Year Award, in recognition of the Port's major improvements at the Richland Airport.

2019

**Port Recognized as
Contributor of the Year:**

The Prosser Economic Development Association awarded the Port as its Contributor of the Year for its valuable contributions in support of economic development in Prosser.

2019

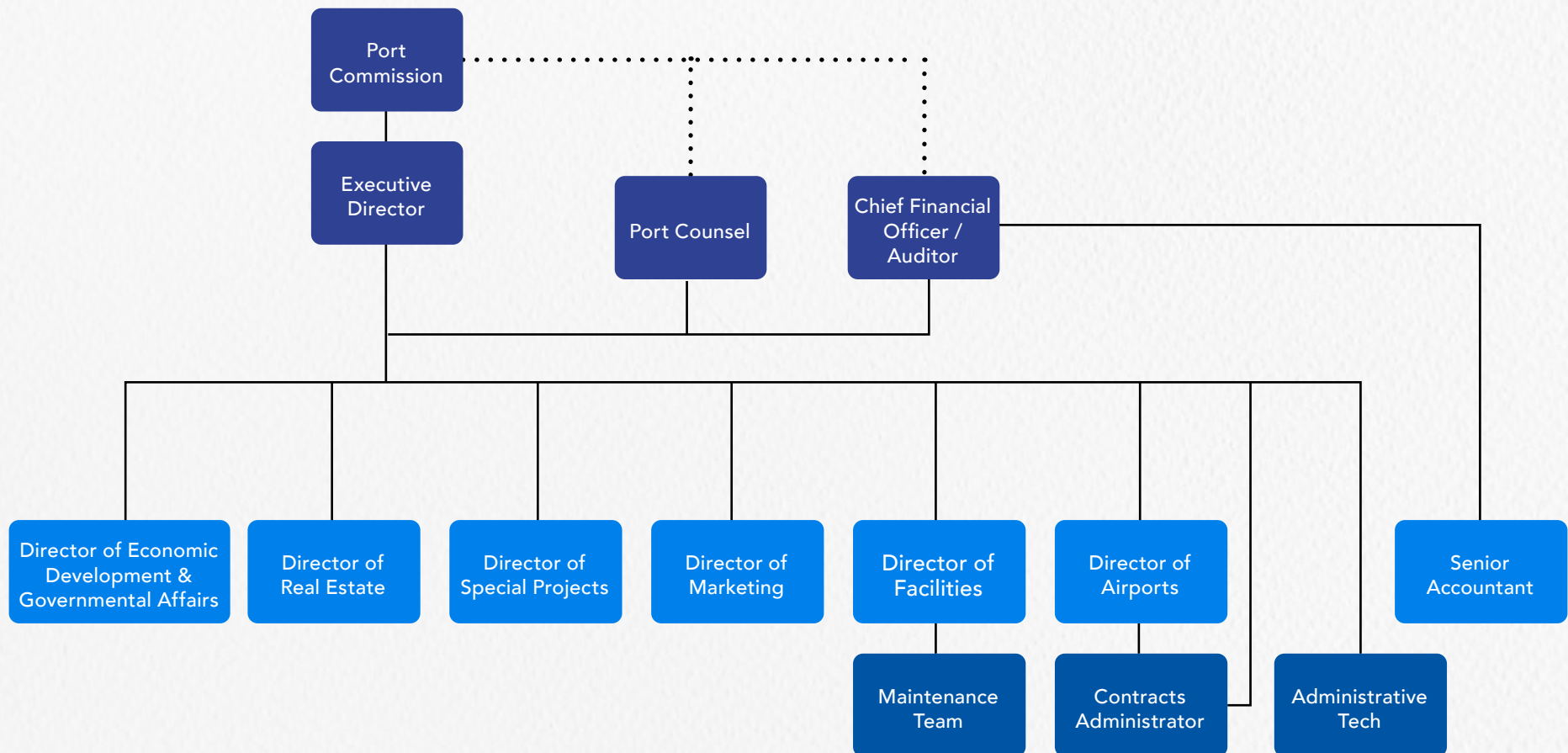
**Research District Innovation
Partnership Zone**

Reauthorized by State:

The Washington State Department of Commerce redesignated the Tri-Cities Research District as an Innovation Partnership Zone (IPZ), which serves as an ecosystem for collaboration and innovation of advanced technology, manufacturing and clean energy.



Port's Organizational Chart



Strategic Plan and CSHI Regular Review and Update Process



The Port's Strategic Plan serves as a planning and governance document to guide the Port's efforts over the short and midterm. It is accompanied by an Annual Action Strategy that describes specific actions the Port will undertake each year in pursuit of its goals. Each year the Port will review its progress and update these guidance documents in conjunction with its other keystone documents, such as the Comprehensive Scheme of Harbor Improvements and the Annual Budget.

Port Values

- ✓ The Port's Commission and staff pledge to operate in an open, accountable, collaborative and decisive manner with complete internal and external **transparency**.
- ✓ The Port places a premium on collaboration with notable outcomes via our public and private **partnerships** that add value in advancing our shared community vision.
- ✓ The Port supports a high performing team with processes in place to support their continuous improvement and innovation that drives results and advances our mission forward
- ✓ The Port is dedicated to the upmost vigilance in its stewardship responsibilities as a **public trustee of the taxpayer's** financial interest.
- ✓ The Port is steadfast in its commitment to equitably supporting its **customers and tenants** on their continuing success.
- ✓ The Port will maintain its **facilities, assets and equipment** in a safe and sustainable condition that preserves the community's investment
- ✓ The Port team will ensure that we are a viable community asset leaving a positive legacy for our community.
- ✓ The Port commits to conducting its affairs in an **ethical, honest and professional manner** even when no one is looking, putting the community before personal interests.



Port Values

- ✓ The Port's success in fulfilling its mission requires integrated **teamwork** and unwavering commitment to maintaining a work environment of mutual respect and support.
- ✓ All Port decisions will prioritize sustaining the Port's **financial viability, protecting the environment** and advancing the region's economy and way of life.
- ✓ The Port recognizes the diversity of the region and commits to include the needs of that **diverse population** in its efforts to improve the local economy, listen more effectively, provide access to jobs, and distribute resources.
- ✓ The Port team will be **ambitious, pursuing greatness and transformation.**
- ✓ The Port team will ensure that we are a viable community asset leaving a **positive legacy for our community.**



Goals and Strategies

The Port of Benton has adopted a suite of achievable Goals and corresponding Strategies that identify pathways to success. These Goals and Strategies are captured in the Port's Annual Action Strategy which further defines specific actions to be taken and assigns responsibility amongst the Port Team for successful completion.

The Goals are organized within these key focus areas:



Organization and Culture



Economic Development



Commercial and Industrial
Real Estate



Stewardship of Public Funds



Intermodal Transportation



Public Access

Focus Area: Organization and Culture



GOALS	STRATEGIES
Redefine the Port's brand and improve community outreach in 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiate the Port in its unique role from other local agencies in a rebranded messaging effort. • Research, design, develop and adopt a 'Port Outreach Plan' (POP) to the general public and stakeholders. • Distinguish Port as a brand and ensure messaging of operational values.
Initiate the Port's leadership program in 2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide focused group and individual leadership training in 2021 and beyond. • Undertake and complete a job satisfaction survey including an industry salary analysis by the end of 2021. • Promote teamwork through routine formal and informal events scheduled in advance throughout the fiscal year. • Prioritize training to increase productivity.
Create and implement an asset management program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research, identify needs and adopt a proactive asset management system to track costs and schedule maintenance activities in close concert with the Port's budgeting process and timeline. • Standardize record storage and retention. • Create financial targets for asset management.



Focus Area: Commercial and Industrial Real Estate

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Diversify the Port's portfolio of real estate assets in alignment with target sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct an advanced manufacturing and distribution center building in North Richland by 2023 in partnership with Private Sector lead Undertake an incubator facility analysis in 2021 Conduct a comprehensive facility condition and market assessment to align to Strategic Plan and capital expenditure planning 6.4 Develop long-range land use plan to support Port's future business growth and diversity
Improve the effectiveness of marketing the Port's real estate portfolio as reflected in an increase in percentage of portfolio occupied or sold.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/Develop specific rent and occupancy targets by asset Revisit and revise the North Richland Marketing and Communications Strategy each year Update the standalone marketing program for the Tri-Cities Research District Effectively market the Port's access to high-speed reliable fiber internet, and expand fiber access to underserved areas and newly acquired land.
Increase the Port's net real estate revenue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify/develop specific rent and occupancy targets by asset Identify sites that require infrastructure extension that can increase revenues Identify each properties value for retainage for lease or disposition for sale

Focus Area: Intermodal Transportation



GOALS	STRATEGIES
Develop a goal to expand the use of the Prosser Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the FAA mandated master plan by mid-2021 • Market Airport to support General Aviation Business flyers
Expand the use of the Richland Airport targeted at freight cargo, manufacturing and medical flight use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the FAA mandated master plan by mid-2021 • Consider and adopt a plan of finance in 2021 for the targeted capital improvements for inclusion in the FY2022-2025 capital budget • Continue to explore FAA funding of a precision instrument approach and the extension of runway 1-19 to 5,000 total feet
Expand utilization of Port's Rail and transload facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Rail Master Plan • Develop marketing materials based on available metrics and studies • Ensure completion of capital repairs to the short line railroad crossings • Facilitate development of strategic projects with agencies and stakeholders



Focus Area: Economic Development

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Define the Port's participation and funding of economic development initiatives and address economic disparity throughout the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaboration with local partners participate in a tourism promotion program in 2021 to guide the port's investments and focus• In conjunction with community partners develop and initiate actions to address economic disparity and diversity throughout the region.• Engage with community partners on an active basis to advance economic development efforts toward targeted sectors including value added agriculture; technology innovation and entrepreneurship; energy and advanced manufacturing.• Convene working groups around industries to lend aid in connecting Port tenants and neighbors with one another in support of entrepreneurial collaboration.
Expand the Port's role in driving the Tri-Cities entrepreneurial economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage the Port's position as the lead agency for the Tri-Cities Research District Innovation Partnership Zone to expand entrepreneurial activity and access to capital in the Tri-Cities.• Proactively recruit startup companies and established mentors to locate in the Research District.• Establish a career pathway program that support education to innovation by spearheading efforts at creating a commercialization leadership position within the Tri-Cities Research District.• Convene Tri-Cities Research District stakeholders in development of property to create commercialization and incubation space.

Focus Area: Economic Development



GOALS	STRATEGIES
Define the Port's broader messaging and recruitment opportunities within defined target sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a site selection marketing program for Advanced Manufacturing with a focus on demonstrating capabilities of the larger business community in the creation of new technologies, processes and skills that enable bio, cyber, and clean energy manufacturing.• Co-develop marketing messaging with the Port of Pasco around the value-added agriculture ecosystem, focusing on each Port's role in food processing and finished product shipping• Emphasize regular discussions with industry professionals including tenants, neighbors, and prospects to identify 'need lists' to enable the recruitment of cooperative businesses and industries.• Develop a needs assessment program in 2021 to prioritize master-planning of Port undeveloped land for target sector recruitment.• Continue to support planning for a North Richland Bridge to support recruitment and logistics.



Focus Area: Stewardship of Public Funds

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Develop and adopt a specific long-term policy regarding the level and use of property taxes to support the Port's operations and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In conjunction with a multi-year cash flow forecast, explore what financial factors would have to be in place to begin to consider, in the long term, a reduction of the tax levy• Identify and understand the potential benefits property tax revenue have on the Port's ability to generate debt at lower interest cost• Research and adopt a policy that targets tax receipts for capital expenditures only for the foreseeable future



Focus Area: Public Access



GOALS	STRATEGIES
Expand the offerings and use of the USS Triton Sail park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt a master plan for the Park and include improvements to river side pedestrian access in the Port's multi year CIP
Sustain and Improve Crow Butte Park and Marina Operational Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow master plan and update infrastructure efficiency
Maintain dedication to Heritage Resource Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and revise heritage resource management plan

How to evaluate new unforeseen opportunities

In pursuing its Mission, the Port recognizes the need to balance a planned and intended future against the flexibility required as conditions evolve and opportunities emerge. “Planned strategies are what we do between opportunities,” and understanding this dynamic is key to the long-term success of the Port. New and unforeseen investment opportunities likely will arise that are not captured in this plan or in the annual capital or operating budgets. The Port strives to remain flexible to capitalize on these “opportunity investments,” and will be deliberate in evaluating the value of the investment. A series of qualitative and quantitative inquiries have been identified to allow the Port to be deliberate and intentional in deciding to pursue some of these opportunities without compromising the success of its ongoing initiatives.

Investment Opportunity Evaluation Criteria

- ✓ Is the initiative consistent with the Port’s values, mission, and goals?
- ✓ Is the initiative aligned with the economic development goals of our communities and the region?
- ✓ Does the initiative present a market-rate or socioeconomically palatable rate-of-return on investment?
- ✓ Does the initiative provide the appropriate level and type of job creation?
- ✓ Are there proportionally beneficial joint ventures, partnerships, or grant funding opportunities to mitigate the Port’s required investment?
- ✓ What, if any, planned Port investment will be delayed or eliminated because of this opportunity investment, and what are the short-term and long-term consequences of that displacement decision? Is that acceptable?
- ✓ Will the local economy and market support the potential success of the project?
- ✓ Does the initiative significantly advance an existing community plan or policy?
- ✓ What should the Port’s role be in the initiative (i.e., support, investment, operations, partner)?
- ✓ Does the Port have sufficient bandwidth to support the initiative?
- ✓ Is any other entity, private or public, better positioned to undertake the investment opportunity, and are they able to do so?

Port of Benton 2030 Vision Statements

With the Port's success, Benton County will have benefited from the Port's strategic direction adopted in 2020:

- ✓ Because of its financial discipline the Port will have reduced reliance on property taxes, focusing facility revenue on capital improvements.
- ✓ The Port of Benton receives recognition by Washington's Governor for its post-Hanford success in guiding the community towards a new advanced manufacturing and technology economy.
- ✓ The Port participated early this year in the groundbreaking for the new regional Innovation and Commercialization Center located in the Port's Technology and Business Campus.
- ✓ Prosser Vintners Village has completed its most recent expansion due to the ever-increasing facility demand bringing over 100 jobs to the community following the receipt of the 2029 WINnovation Award for Marketing.
- ✓ A new expansion induced the lease of 150 acres of the remaining property at the North Horn Rapids Technology-Industrial park bringing over 400 jobs to the community.
- ✓ In conjunction with TRIDEC and Tri-Cities Research District, the Port supported Washington State University and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in being awarded a National Academy of Sciences Grant for studying the feasibility of expanding its BioProducts, Sciences and Engineering Laboratory (BSEL).
- ✓ The median household income in Benton County has increased by 30%, adjusted for inflation, since 2020.
- ✓ The Port participated early this year in the groundbreaking for the new Washington State University Tri-Cities computational sciences and engineering facility located in the Port's Technology and Business Campus.
- ✓ Pacific Northwest National Laboratory's 5,000 scientists, engineers and professional staff recognized the Port's work in fostering and promoting global innovation research and commercialization.
- ✓ The USS Triton Sail Park recently announced its 20-year anniversary celebration that will feature keynote remarks by the Secretary of Defense and retired Chief of Naval Operations William K. Lescher at the joint Hanford History and B Reactor tour facility.
- ✓ The Port of Benton is recognized for its diversified waterfront development that supports education, entrepreneurship, and industry partnerships.