



PORT OF  BENTON



# Rail Modernization & Intermodal Facility Information Night

July 8, 2024



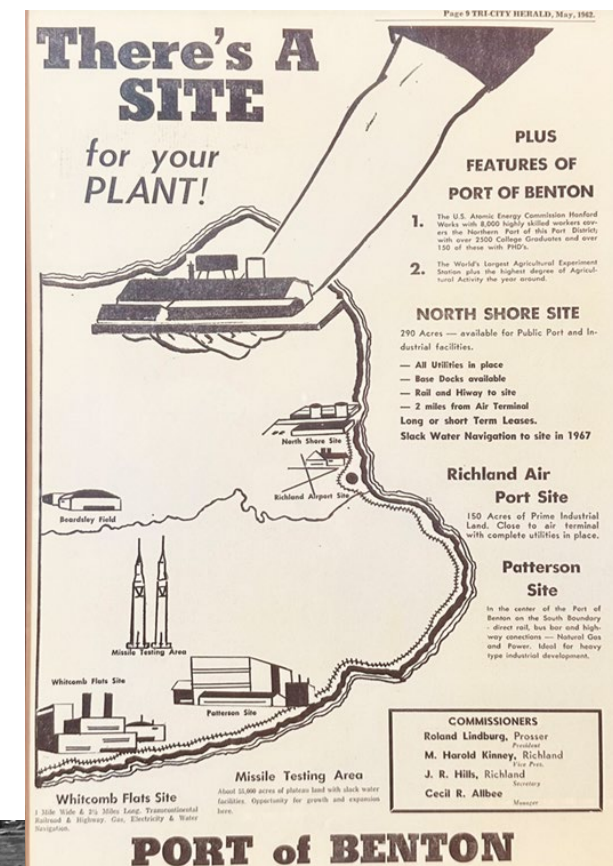


# Ports in Washington State

## Drive Economic Growth, Trade and Tourism

### Port of Benton History

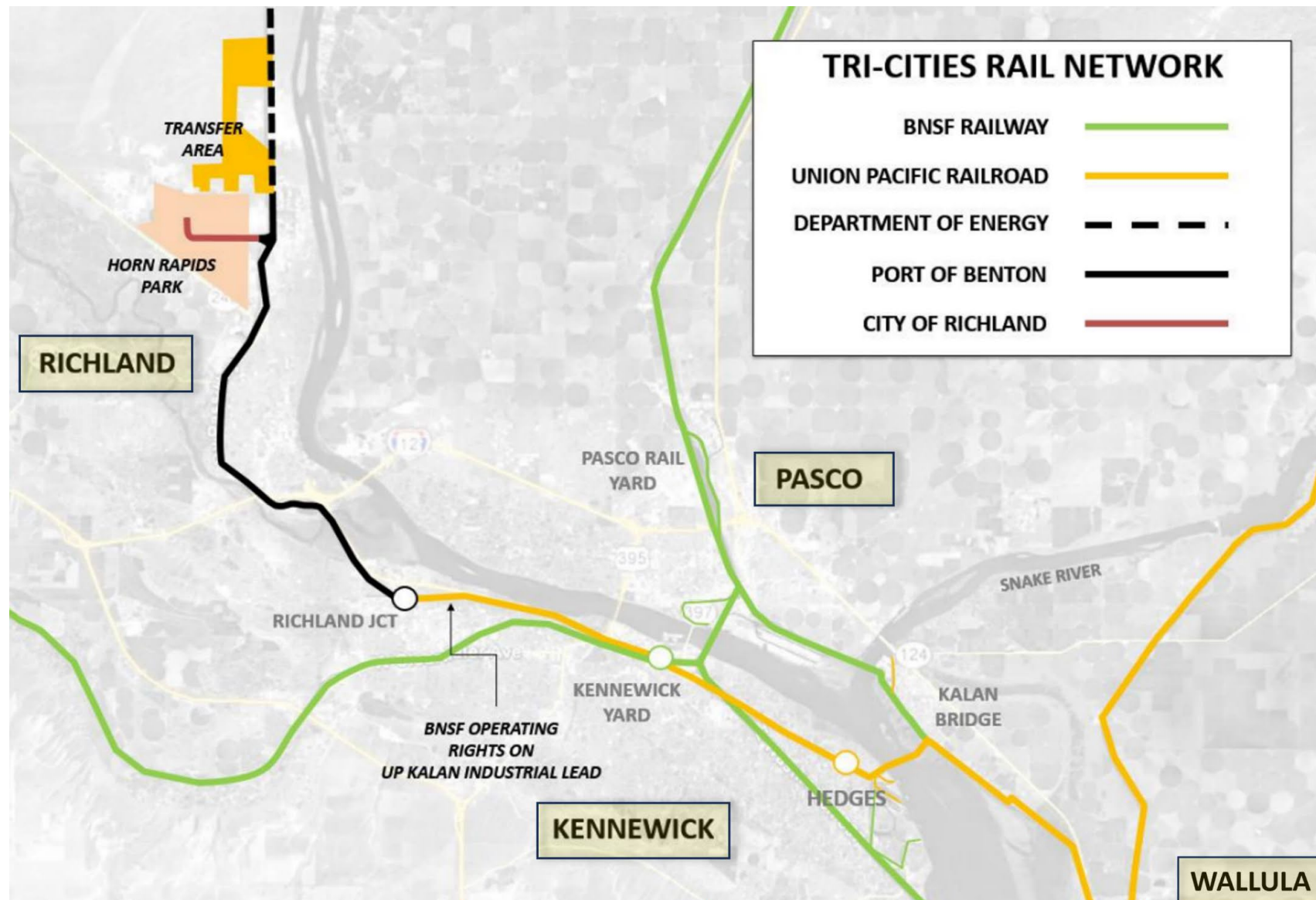
- November 1958: Voters approve new Port of Benton District
- Established to drive industrial development and transition federal land for economic development
- Companies in port facilities and properties employ over 3,000 people and generate more than \$600 million in revenue yearly, representing 5% of Benton County's economy





# Tri-Cities Rail Network

Port Rail Black Solid Line on Map







# Port of Benton Rail Line

## Yellow Line on Map

- Port's Southern Connection rail line runs from Columbia Center Blvd. in Kennewick to the south side of Horn Rapids Road in Richland
- 16 miles of track with 48,000 rail ties
- 4 bridges
- 10 at-grade rail crossings
- "At-grade" is a railroad crossing that intersects with vehicle traffic

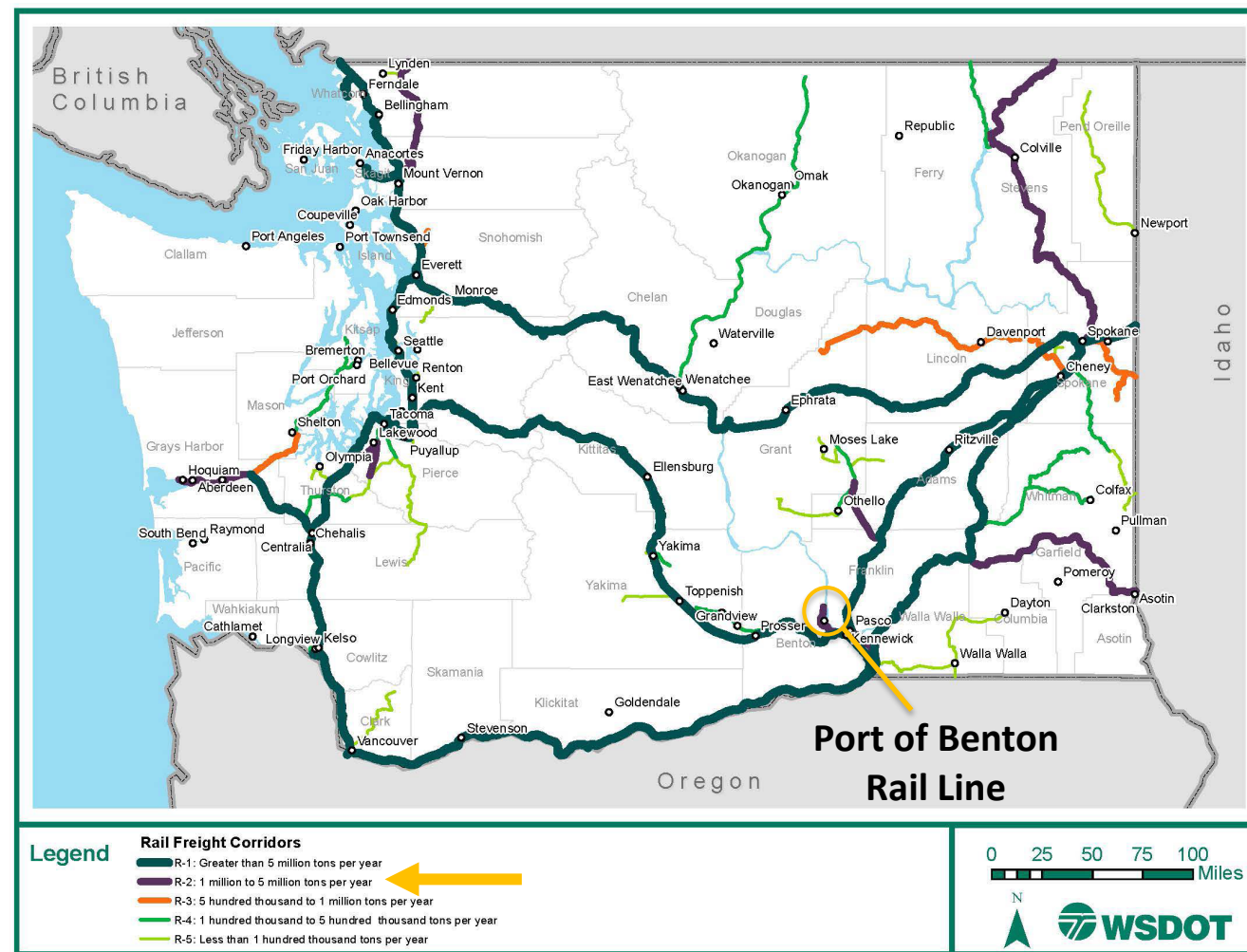






# Port's Rail Is Part of Washington's Freight Rail Network

- Class I railroads Union Pacific and BNSF Railway use the Port's track to serve their customers
- More than 1.3 million tons of freight shipped annually on Port track
- Second highest annual tonnage of goods transported on a short line in the state
- An estimated 3,000 local jobs and 1.5 million statewide are tied to freight-dependent industries







UNION NJ

City Limit

Sale Pending

Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park

**ATLAS AGRO**

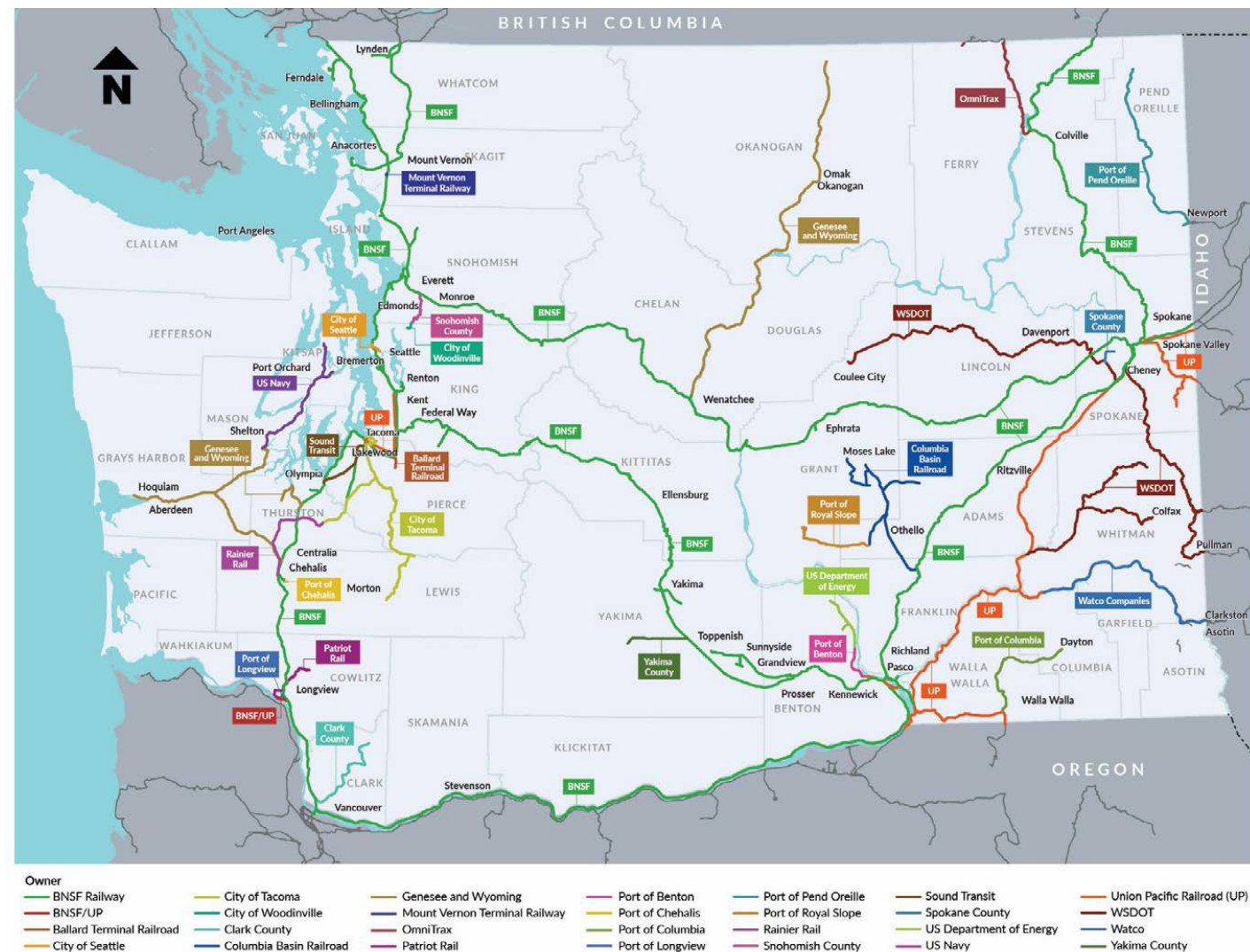






# Rail Operations & Schedules

- Federal law allows for free movement of commerce on the nation's rail lines
- Port of Benton has very little control over train operations or schedules in our area







## Rail Line History

*Courtesy U.S. Department of Energy*





# Southern Connection Rail Line History

## DOE Owns Rail Line Until 1998

- 1947: U.S. government negotiates with Union Pacific and BNSF Railway (predecessor) to share costs to build a connection between the Hanford Site's existing track with the main rail line owned by the railroads
- Material deliveries to Hanford only had one rail service, requiring a 240-mile journey to move items 12 miles from Pasco
- August 15, 1949: Construction of Hanford's "Southern Connection" rail line begins
- May 23, 1950: Opening ceremony and test run of the first train
- 1950s to 1980s: Rail line hauled mostly coal and construction materials to the Hanford Site



*Courtesy U.S. Department of Energy, 1944*



*Courtesy U.S. Department of Energy, 1963*





# Southern Connection Rail Line History

## DOE Transferred Rail to Port in 1998

- 1990s: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) determines it no longer needs the Southern Connection rail line and explores closing the rail line
- 1990s: Port of Benton requests ownership of the rail asset to benefit the community's economic development
- 1998: DOE transfers ownership of the Southern Connection rail line to Port of Benton
- 1998: Port enters lease contract with company to operate and maintain the rail line



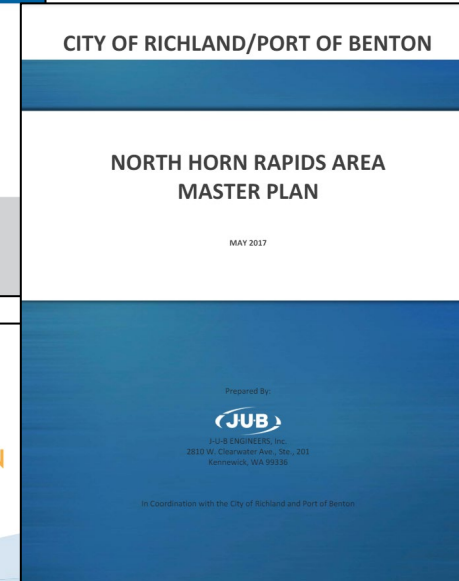


# Project Plans

## Planning Supports Economic Vitality

- Port Commission establishes long-term strategies
- Comprehensive Plan (Updated Annually)
- Port of Benton Transportation Improvement Program (Updated Annually)
- Port of Benton and City of Richland Rail Master Plan (2017)
- City of Richland/Port of Benton North Horn Rapids Area Master Plan (2017)
- BST Rail Study (2017)
- Track Assessment Report, Tangent (2013)

**[PortofBenton.com/About-the-Port/Planning-and-Finance](https://PortofBenton.com/About-the-Port/Planning-and-Finance)**







# Collaborative Relationships

Key to Planning & Implementing Projects



**Inter-Tribal Advisory Board**





## City of Richland Partnership



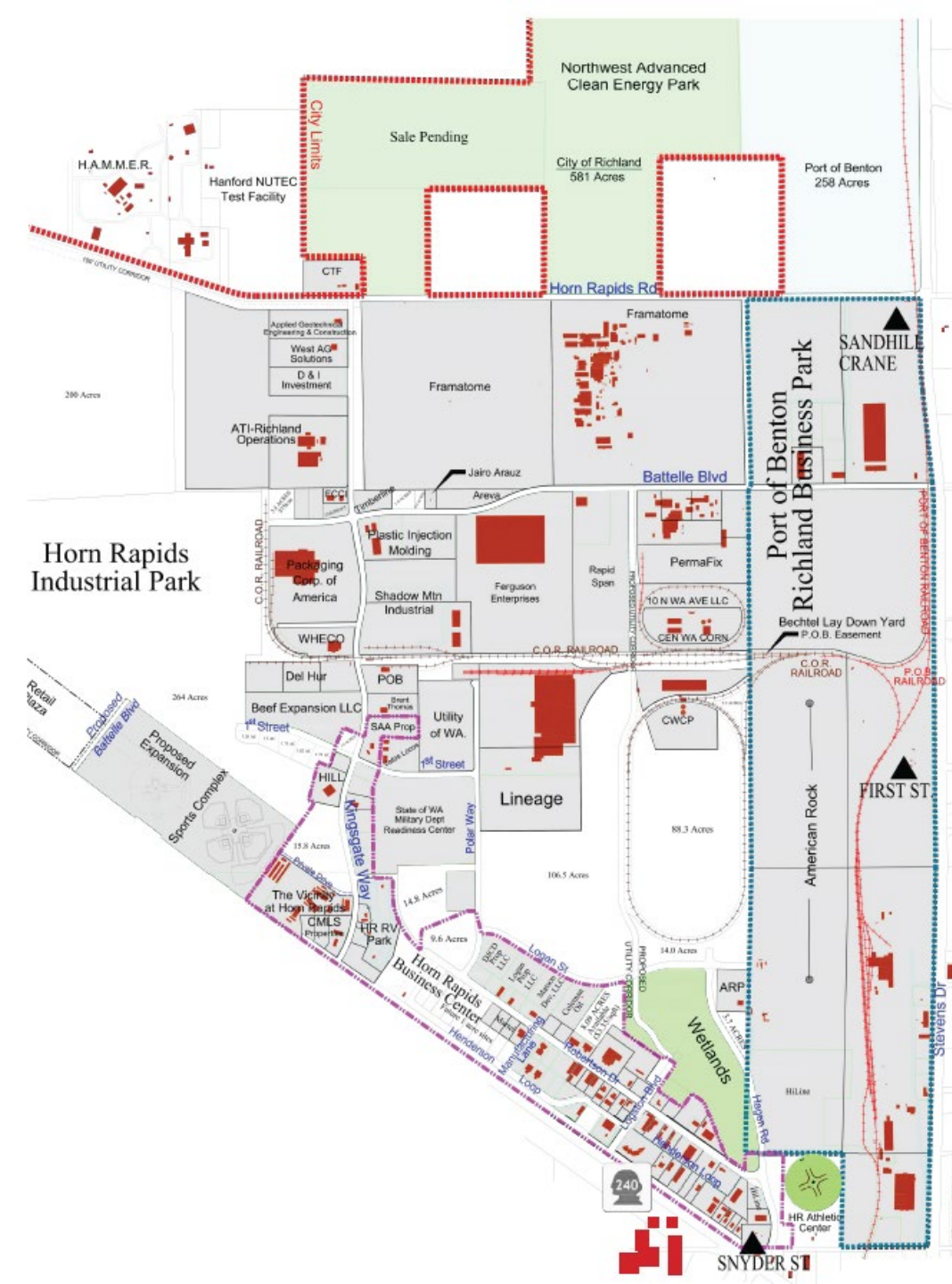




# City & Port Partnership

## Collective Planning

- Port and City long-term collaboration, joint planning and vision
- Economic development projects that benefit the community and broader region
- Leverage each partner's strengths





## Planned 2024 Rail Crossing Replacement Projects





# Port Rail Crossings

- Four Port rail crossings will be replaced or repaired this year

## Why?

- These improvements will help increase train speeds, enhance safety and reduce vehicle traffic interruptions at crossings
- The Projects will also support our growing local agriculture and other industries in getting goods to market





# State Route 240 Crossing

## 2024 Rail Projects

### Planned Work

- Replace the railroad crossing
- Replace the crossing flashing lights and gates
- Port will continue asphalt and concrete maintenance until crossing is replaced to sustain safe operations

### Anticipated Timeline – Late Summer to Fall 2024

- Depending on material delivery
- Exact dates to be determined

### Road Closure & Detours

- Work will require a full road closure over a weekend
- Marked detours via Stevens Drive, Battelle Blvd. and Kingsgate Way







# Airport Way Crossing

## 2024 Rail Projects

### Planned Work

- Replace the railroad crossing
- Replace the gates mechanisms
- Change lights to LEDs

### Anticipated Timeline – Summer 2024

- Exact dates to be determined

### Road Closure & Detours

- Work will require a full road closure over a weekend
- Marked detours via Terminal Drive to Van Giesen Street





# Kingsgate Way Crossing

## 2024 Rail Projects

### Planned Work

- Replace rail signal equipment
- Change lights to LEDs

### Anticipated Timeline – Summer 2024

- Exact dates to be determined

### Road Closure & Detours

- No closures or detours for vehicle traffic







# Saint Street Crossing

## 2024 Rail Projects

### Planned Work

- Replace the railroad crossing
- Install lighted crossbucks

### Anticipated Timeline – Summer 2024

- Exact dates to be determined

### Road and RV Park Closure & Detours

- Work will require a full road closure over a weekend
- Access to and from the Moon River RV Park will be blocked
- RV Park residents to use the right in, right out onto State Route 240







## Planned 2024 Rail Tie Replacements Project





# Rail Tie Replacements

## 2024 Rail Projects

### Planned Work

- Replace ~ 3,000 ties and add additional ballast
- Port track between Duportail Street and the Horn Rapids Industrial Park

### Anticipated Timeline – Summer to Fall 2024

- About 8 weeks, exact dates to be determined

### Why?

- Replacing these ties will improve the track safety and extend the life of the railroad track
- This work is also intended to help move the track speeds from 5 to 10 mph

### Road Closure & Detours

- No closures or detours for vehicle traffic
- Project will impact train traffic
- Work windows late into the evening likely to minimize train disruptions







# Rail Intermodal Facility Project





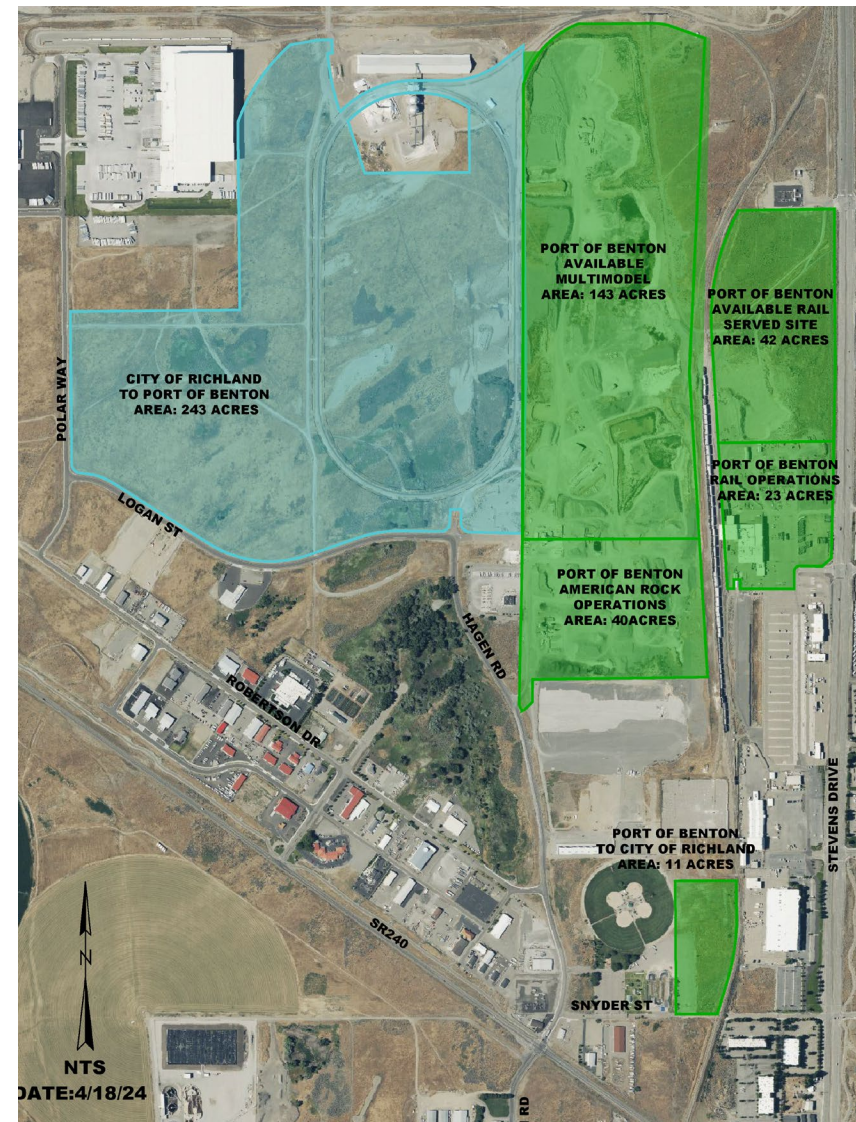


# Planned Intermodal Facility

## Supporting the Growth of Local Industries

- A planned rail-served distribution and transload hub
- Will drive additional private-sector investment, creating jobs
- Port and City of Richland working on a jointly recommended industrial land swap between the entities

*Blue shading is current City property,  
green shading is current Port property*







# Planned Intermodal Facility

## Why Rail?

- Demand for Eastern Washington goods is growing – intermodal facility will give them additional capacity to get their goods to market
- Port's rail line is served by both Class I railroads – rare in Washington, making it uniquely beneficial to local industries
- Lowers costs and carbon emissions, one freight train can haul a load that would otherwise require over 300 trucks
- Maximizes efficiency as rail shipments to seaports are received 24/7



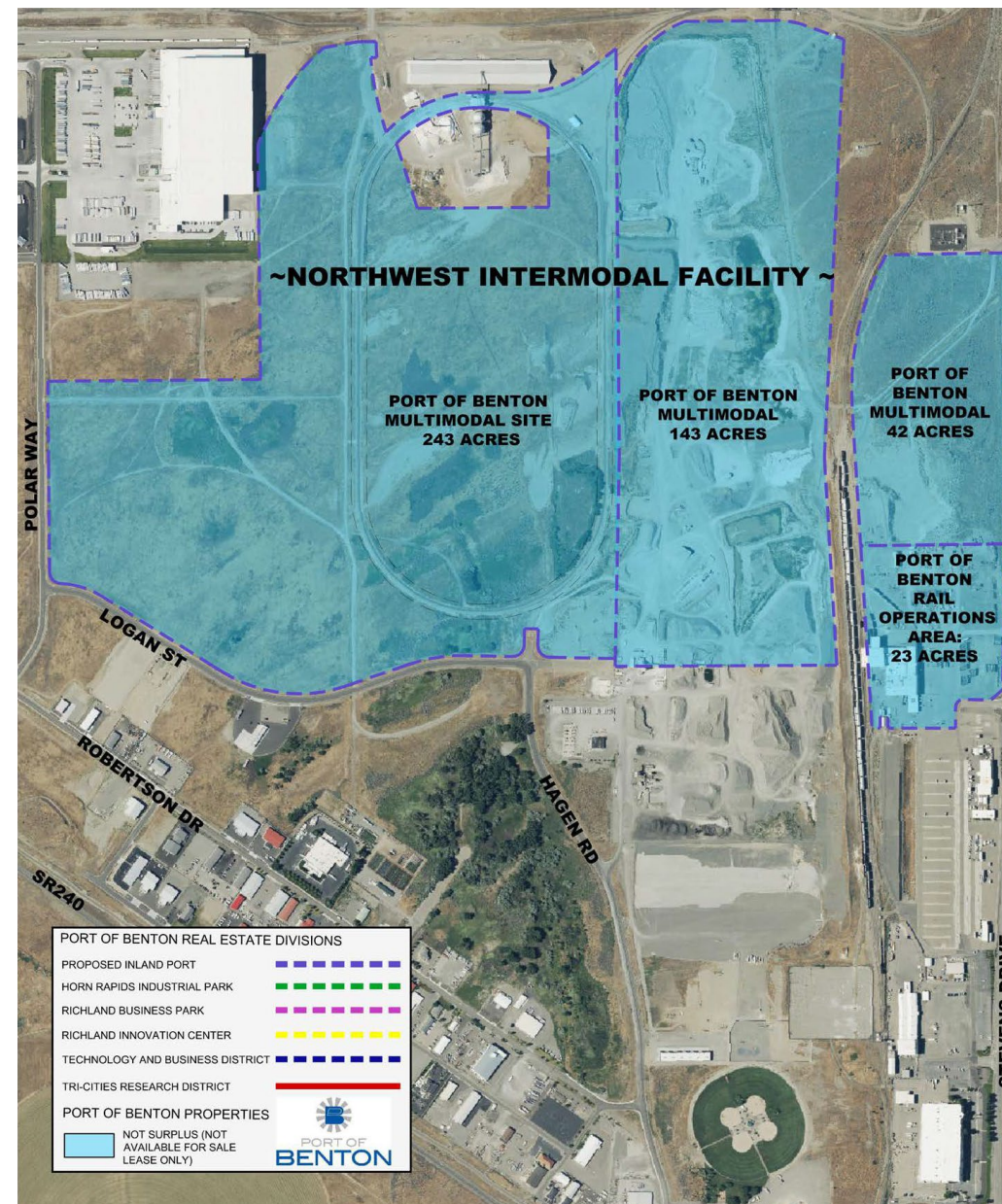




# Planned Intermodal Facility

## A Critical Link in the Supply Chain

- Site: Intermodal 560 acres, light blue main area and loop track
- Plans include:
  - Constructing additional track, warehouse storage buildings
  - Installing handling equipment to move containers and truck trailers on and off trains
  - Leveraging Port locomotive repair facility for rail-related companies and activities
- Infrastructure planning underway, construction anticipated to begin in 2025 - 2026







# Thank You to Our Partners!

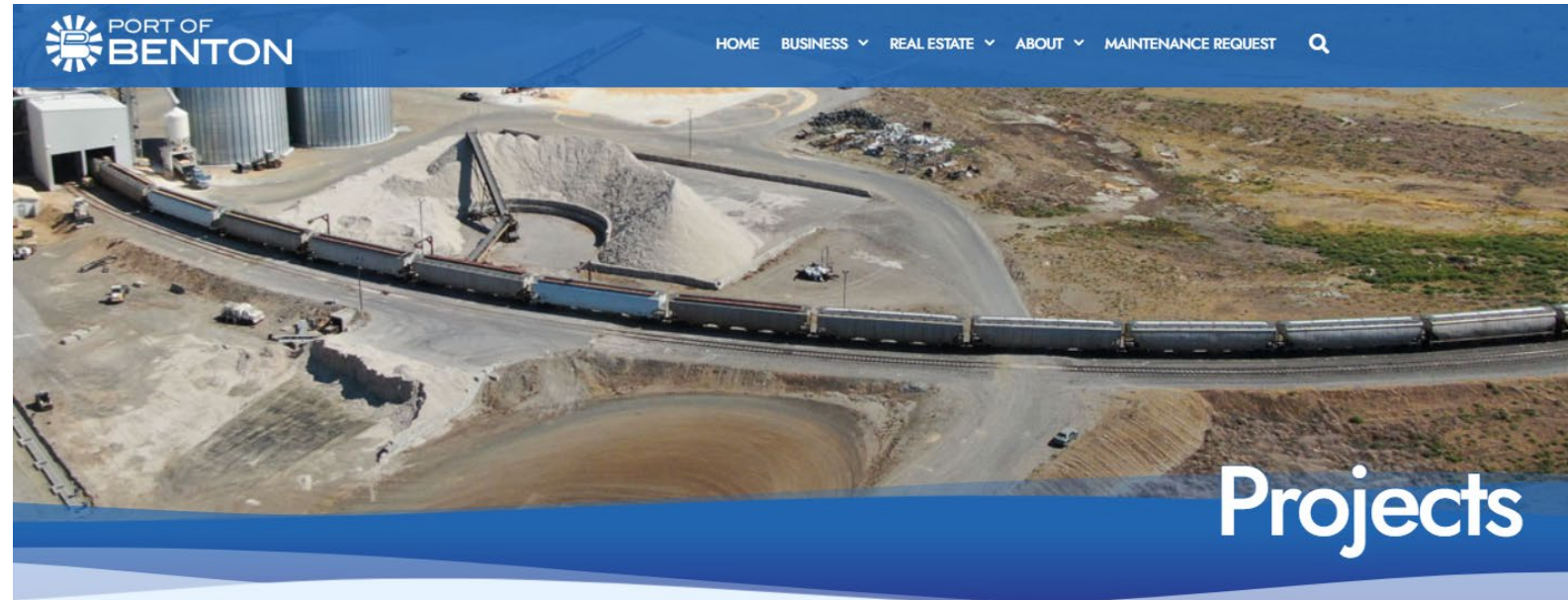






# For Information on Port Projects

**[PortofBenton.com/Projects](https://PortofBenton.com/Projects)**

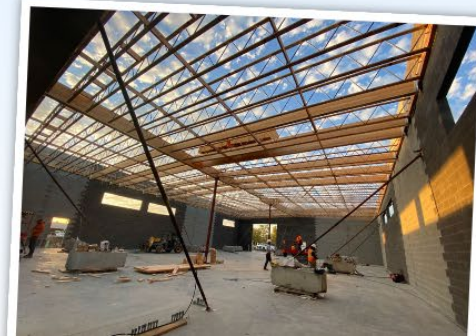


## What's Happening at the Port

The Port's mission is economic development, managing its public assets and making strategic investments to be a catalyst for regional economic growth and prosperity.

Explore this page to learn more about the Port's current and planned major projects.

This important work requires long-term and annual planning, strong partnerships, and ongoing public communications and engagement.





# Sign Up for General Port News & Updates



**[PortofBenton.com/News-Sign-Up](https://PortofBenton.com/News-Sign-Up)**







# Explore Displays Around the Room

## Speak With Port, Partners & Rail Users



### Rail Economy

**Transports the Goods You Use Every Day**

- Rail connects with trucks and barges to move goods in the Mid-Columbia region, agriculture and more

**Creates Local Jobs**

- Freight rail is important to the local economy
- An estimated 3,000 local jobs are tied to freight rail

**WASHINGTON FREIGHT-DEPENDENT INDUSTRIES**

- **\$212.7 billion** Washington GDP generated by freight-dependent industries
- **\$1.5 billion** Washington employees depend on freight rail

**Powers Trade for Growing Tri-Cities**

- Rail supports the increasing demand for Washington goods

**Solves Trucking Challenges**

- Truck driver shortages, rising fuel costs are making truck transport less attractive
- One freight train can haul a load equivalent to 300 trucks
- Rail moves products through Washington faster



### Airport Way Rail Crossing Replacement

**Planned Work**

- Replace the railroad crossing and gates
- Replace lights with LEDs
- Includes replacing Kingsgate Way

**Project Schedule & Road Closure**

- Summer of 2024 – Exact project dates to be determined
- Work window limited to minimize disruption
- (Example: Noon on a Thursday through Friday)
- Full road closure for the weekend

**Project Funding**

- \$1.03 Million Freight Rail Program (FRAP) Grant from the State Department of Transportation

These improvements will help reduce vehicle traffic interruption growing local agriculture and commerce



### Saint Street Rail Crossing Replacement

**Planned Work**

- Replace the railroad crossing with flashing lights and gates
- Install lighted crossbucks

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### Rail Intermodal Facility

**Supporting the Growth of Local Industries**

**Planned Project**

- Create an intermodal facility by constructing additional track, commodity storage buildings and handling equipment, and leveraging the Port's locomotive repair facility

**Intermodal Transportation Benefits**

- Serves as a critical link in the supply chain to support our local shippers in getting their goods to market
- Moves containers and truck trailers on and off trains – one freight train can haul a load that would otherwise require over 300 trucks
- Lowers costs and carbon emissions, as companies can use trucks for local service and rail for long haul
- Maximizes efficiency as rail shipments to seaports are received 24/7
- Drives additional private-sector investment, creating jobs

**Project Funding & Anticipated Timeline**

- Central Washington Corn Processors Invested \$34 Million to Initiate the Project
- Port Is Applying for Federal and State Grants
- Infrastructure Planning Underway
- Construction Anticipated to Begin in 2025 - 2026

**PORT OF BENTON**  
PortofBenton.com/Projects









# Thank You for Your Interest & Involvement!



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