



## 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



Page 9 TRI-CITY HERALD, May, 1962.

### There's A SITE for your PLANT!

PLUS FEATURES OF PORT OF BENTON

1. The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission Hanford Works now 8,000 employees are located in the Northern Part of this Port District, with over 2500 College Graduates and over 100,000 families.
2. The World's Largest Agricultural Experiment Station plus the highest degree of Agricultural Activity the year around.

**NORTH SHORE SITE**  
290 Acres - available for Public Port and Industrial facilities.  
— All Utilities in place  
— Base Docks available  
— Rail and Highway to site  
— 2 miles from Air Terminal  
Long or short Term Leases.  
Slack Water Navigation to site in 1967

**Richland Air Port Site**  
150 Acres of Prime Industrial Land. Close to air terminal with complete utilities in place.

**Patterson Site**  
In the center of the Port of Benton District - direct rail, bus and highway connections - Natural Gas and Power. Ideal for heavy type industrial development.

**COMMISSIONERS**  
Roland Lindberg, Prosser  
M. Harold Kinney, Richland  
J. R. Hills, Richland  
Cecil R. Allbee, Manager

**PORT of BENTON**

Whitcomb Flats Site  
1 Mile W. & 2 1/2 Miles East, Transcontinental Railroad & Highway, Gas, Electricity & Water Navigation.  
About 22,000 acres of plowable land with slack water facilities. Opportunity for growth and expansion here.

Missile Testing Area

Boardley Field

Richland Airport Site

North Shore Site

Missile Testing Area

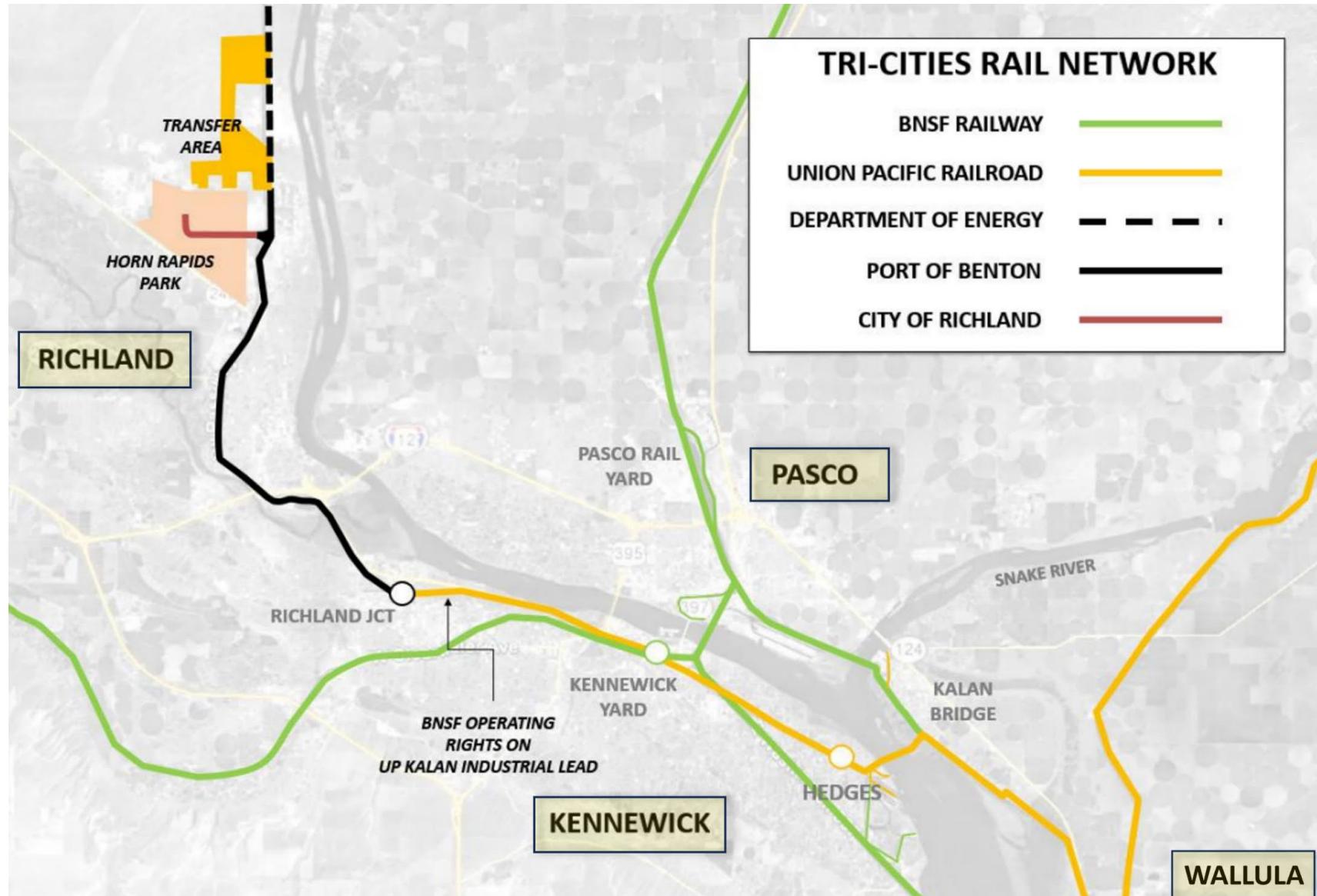
Whitcomb Flats Site

Patterson Site



# Tri-Cities Rail Network

## Port Rail Black Solid Line on Map

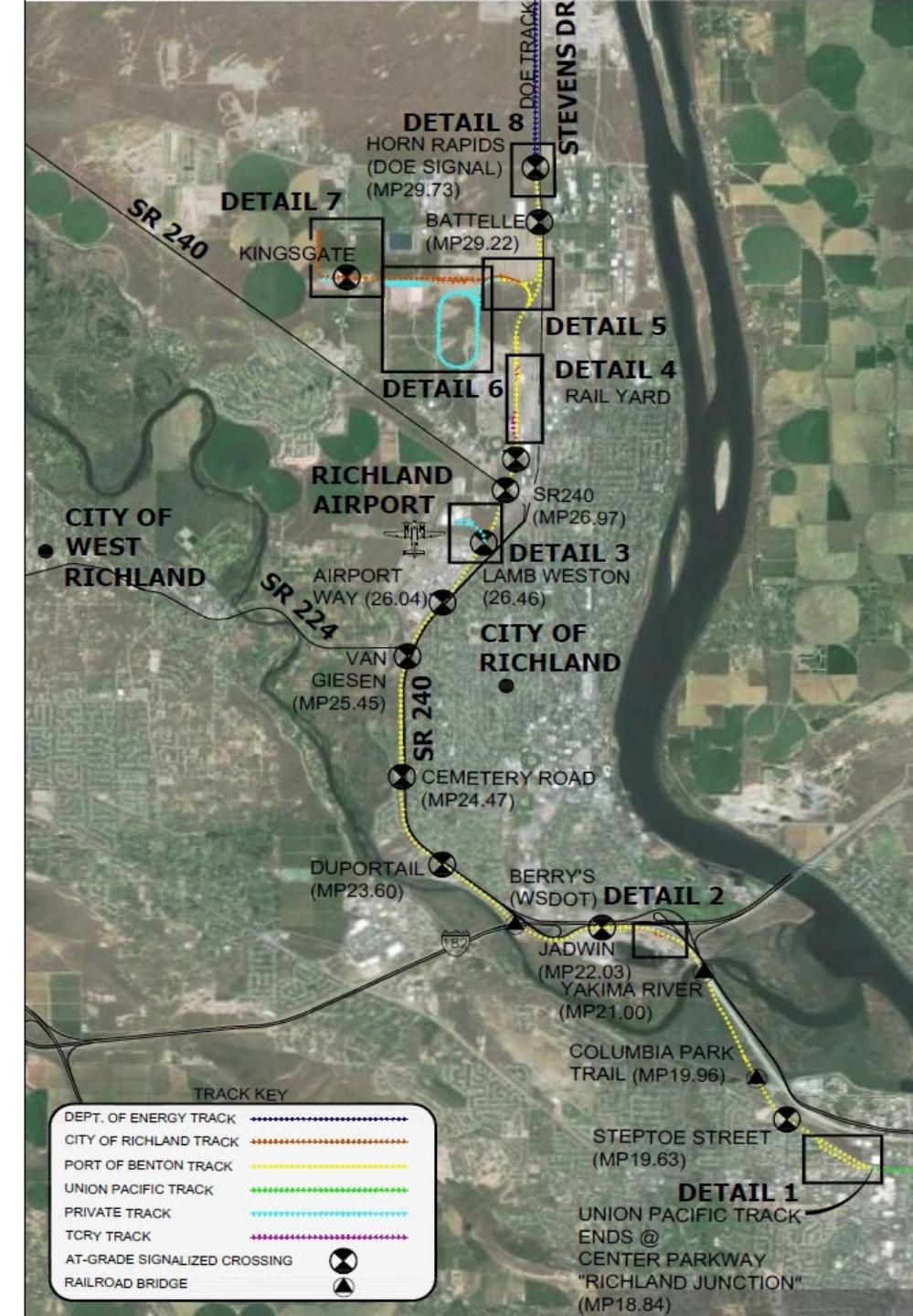




# Port of Benton Rail Line

## Yellow Line on Map

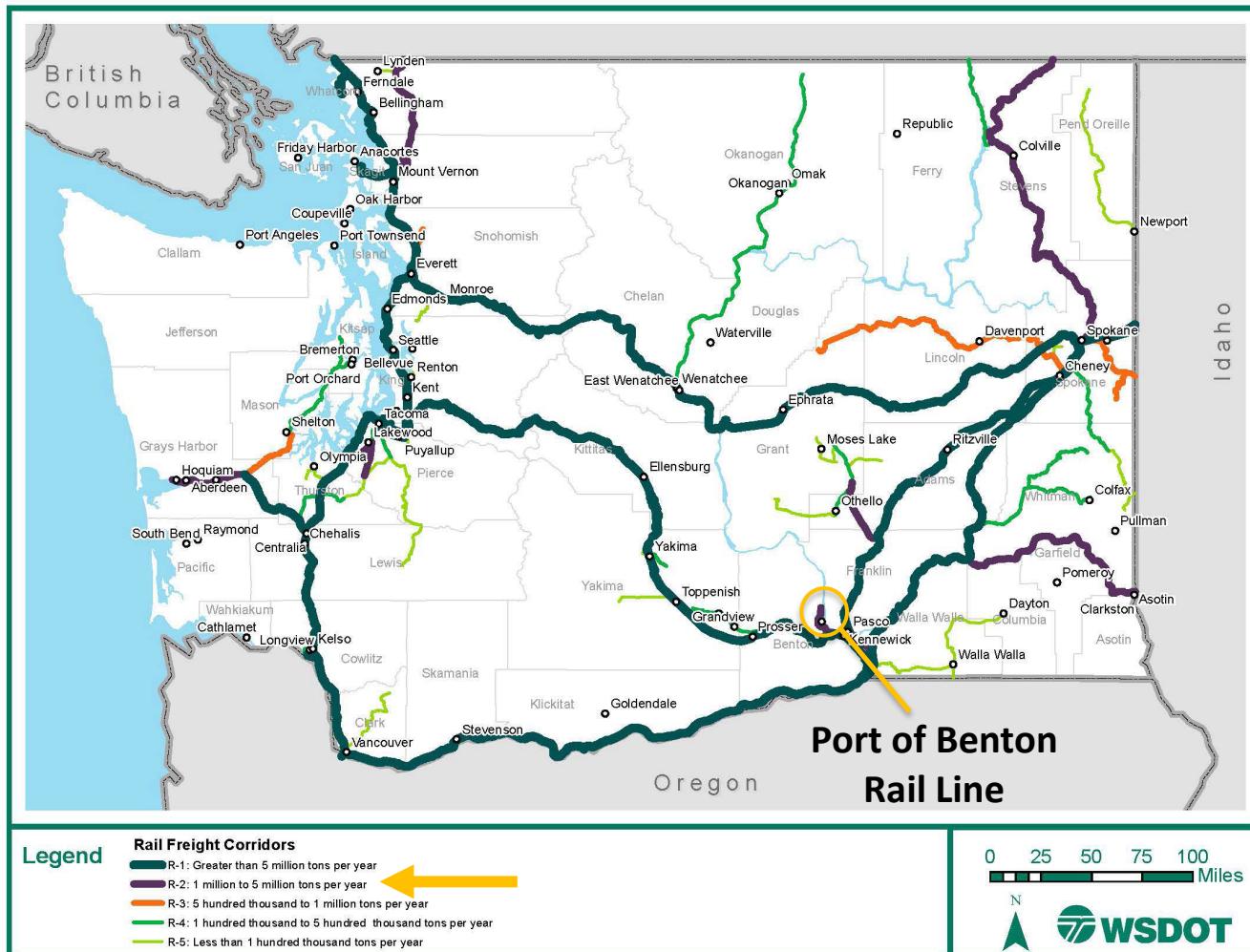
- Port's Southern Connection rail line runs from Columbia Center Blvd. in Kennewick to the south side of Horn Rapids Road in Richland
- 16 miles of track with 48,000 rail ties
- 4 bridges
- 10 at-grade rail crossings
- “At-grade” is a railroad crossing that intersects with vehicle traffic





# 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





# North Richland Port Rail Users

## Existing & Future Customers





# 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](http://PortofBenton.com/About-the-Port/Planning-and-Finance)





# Collaborative Relationships

Key to Planning & Implementing Projects



Inter-Tribal Advisory Board



**City of Richland Partnership**

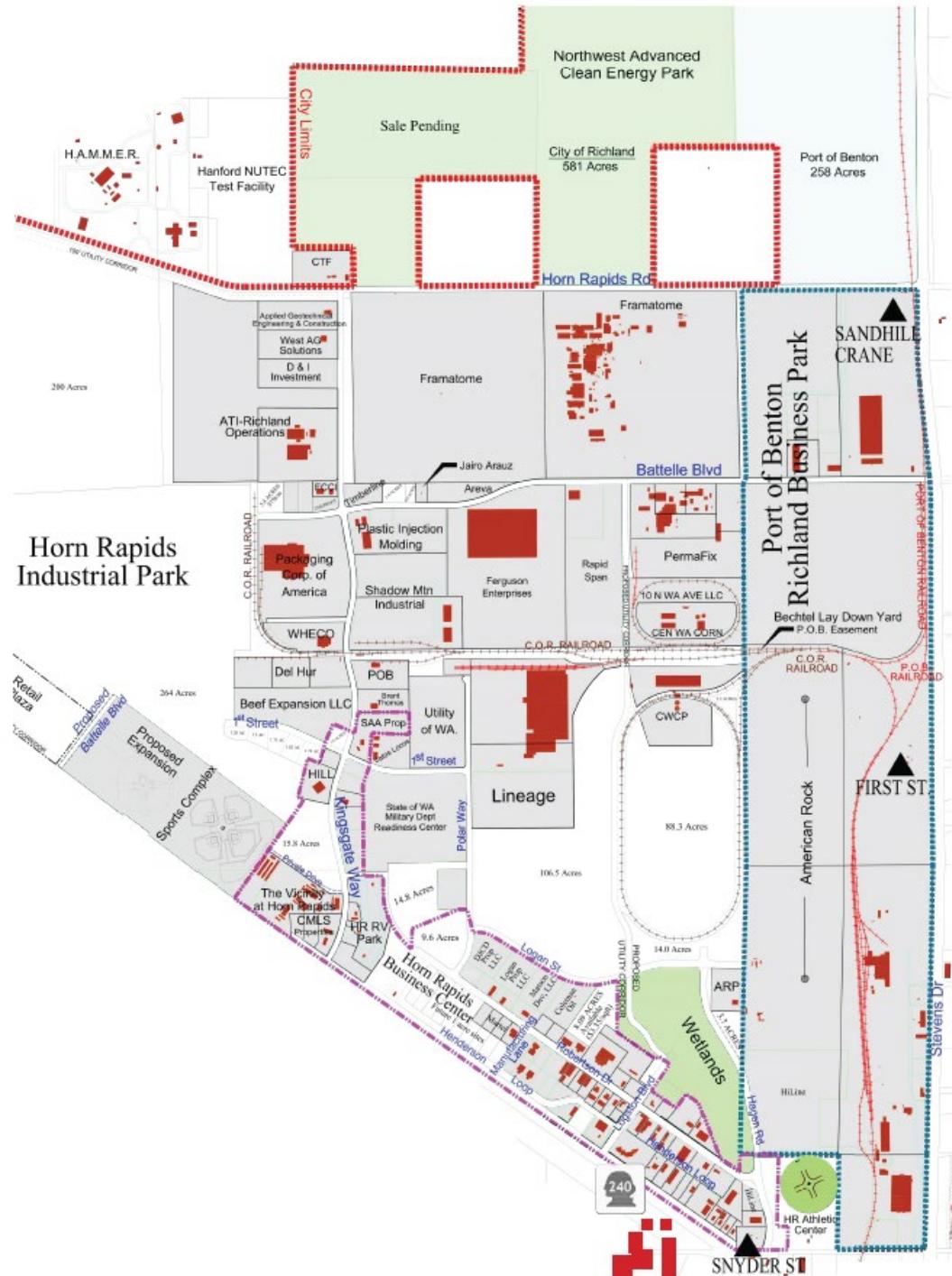




# City & Port Partnership

## 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

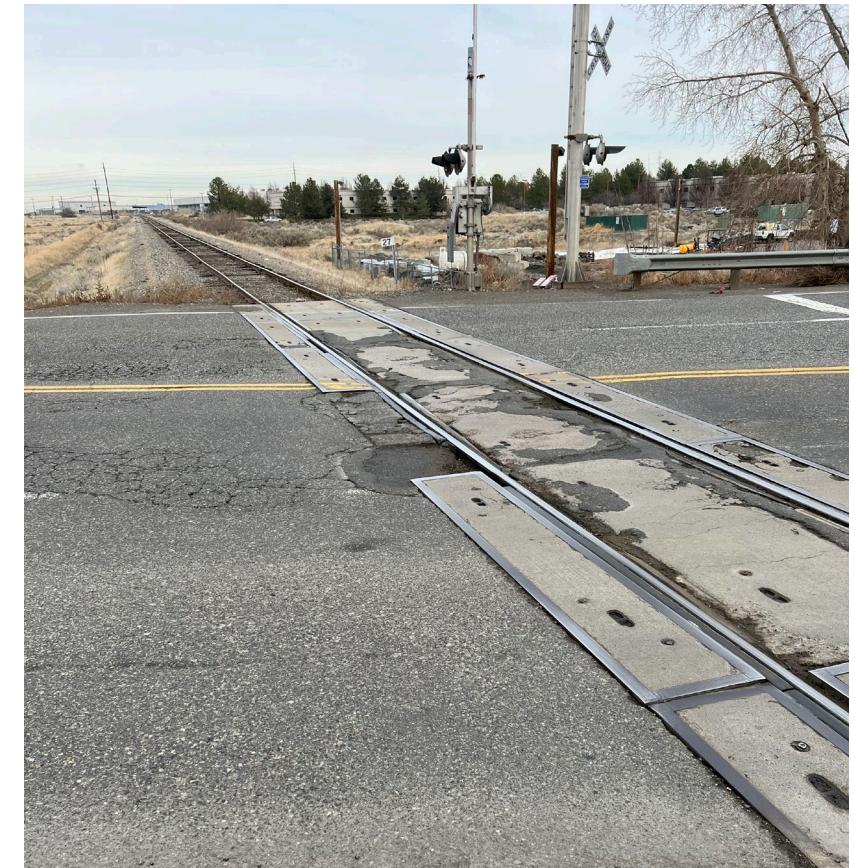
- Replace the railroad crossing
- Replace the crossing flashing lights and gates
- Port will continue asphalt and concrete maintenance until crossing is replaced to sustain safe operations

### 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

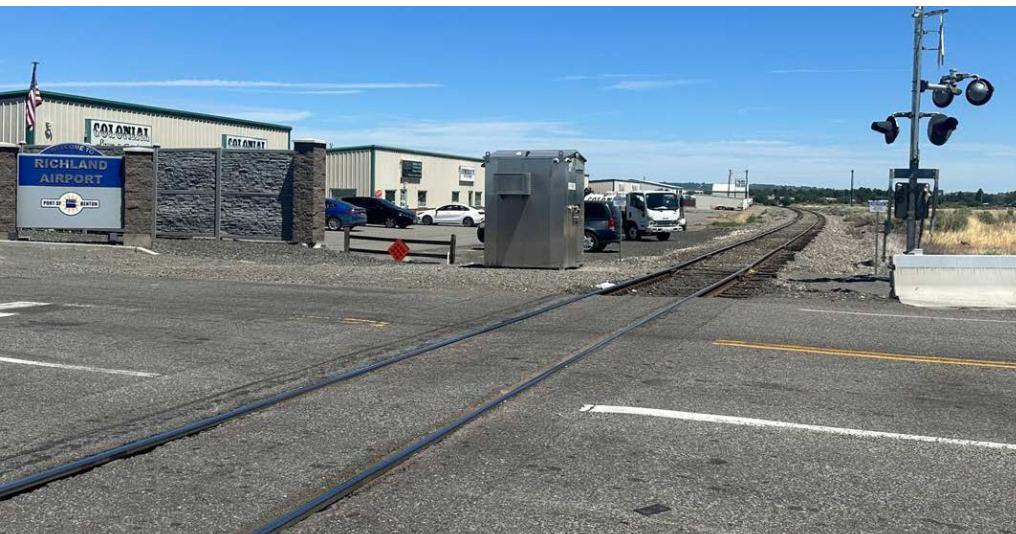
- Replace the railroad crossing
- Replace the gates mechanisms
- Change lights to LEDs

### 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

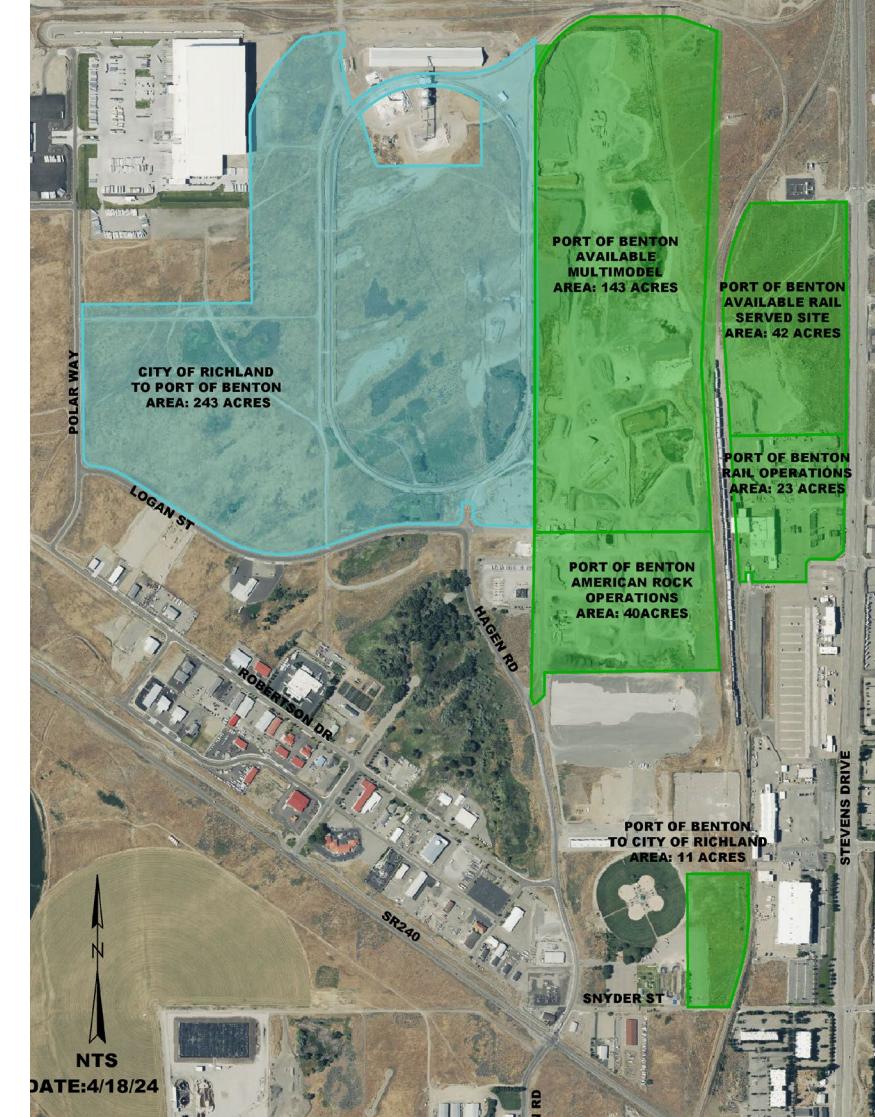


# Planned Intermodal Facility

## 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

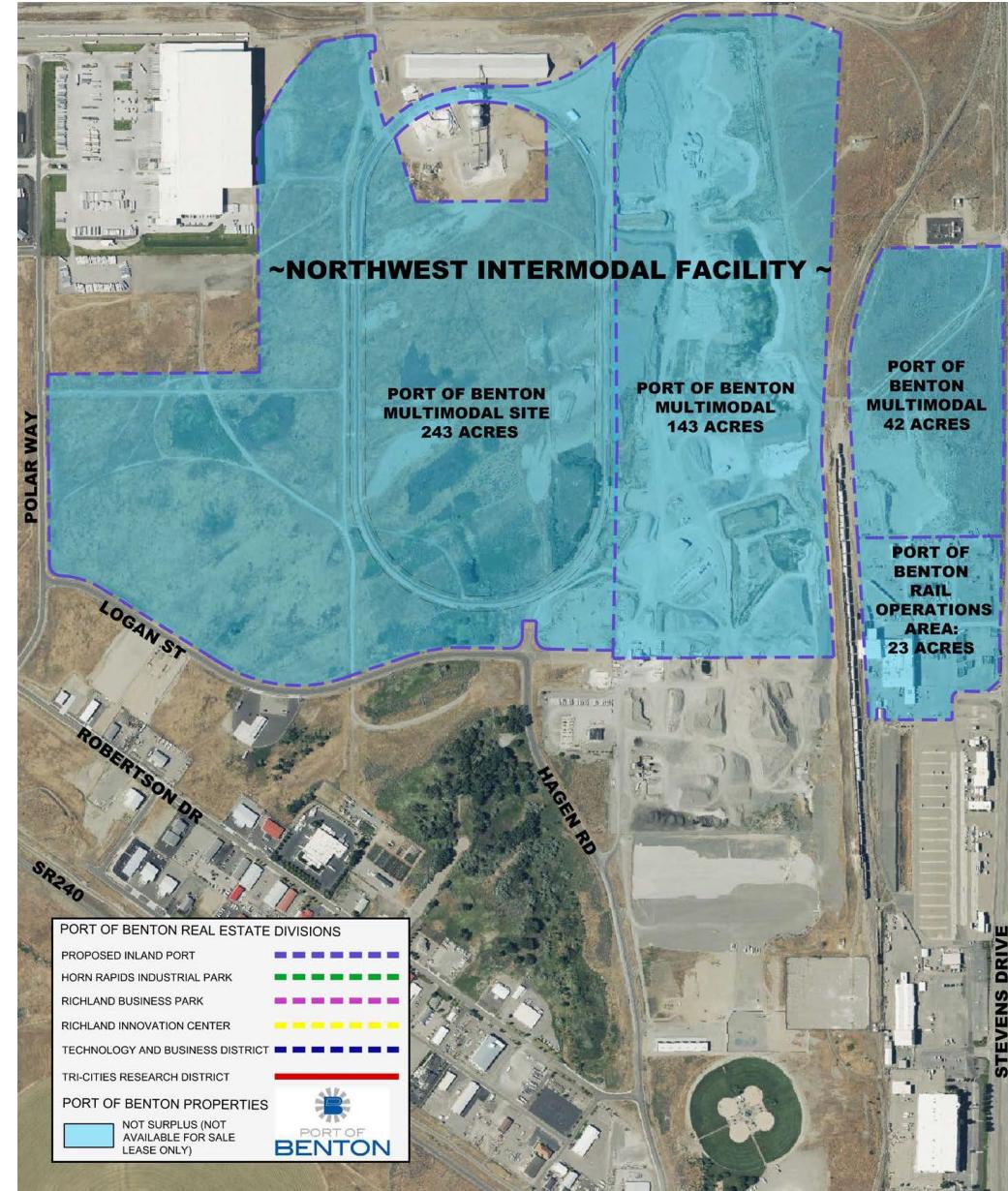




# Planned Intermodal Facility

## 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





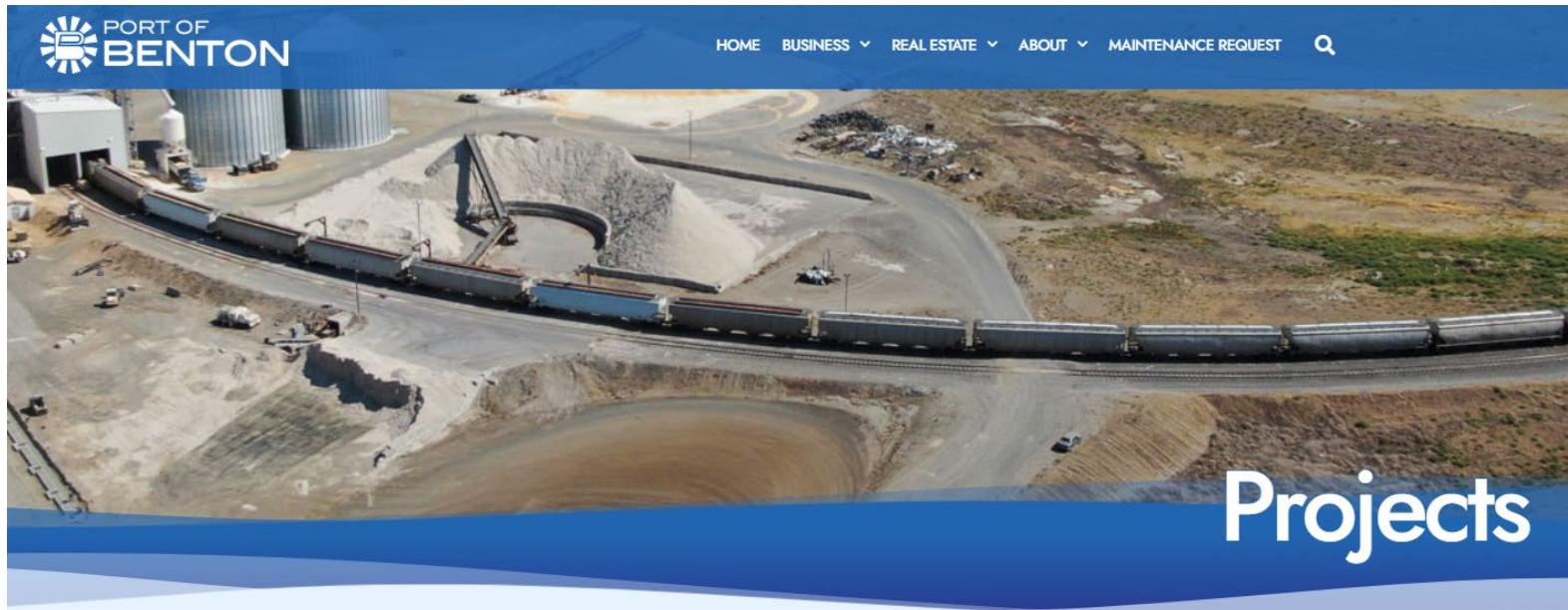
# Thank You to Our Partners!





# For Information on Port Projects

**PortofBenton.com/Projects**

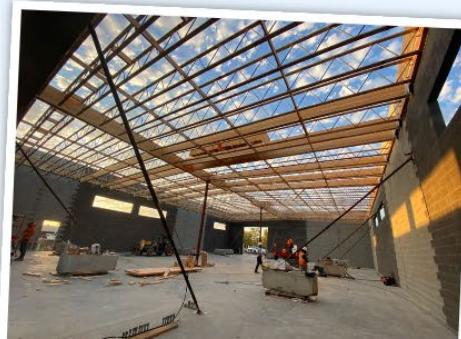


## What's Happening at the Port

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](http://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 is a major industry
- Freight rail is important to the local economy
- An estimated 3,000 local jobs are tied to rail

**WASHINGTON FREIGHT-DEPENDENT INDUSTRY**

**\$212.7 billion**  
Washington GDP generated by freight-dependent industries

**\$1.5 billion**  
Washington employees depend on rail

**Powers Trade for Growing Tri-Cities**

- Rail supports the increasing demand for Washington goods

**Solves Trucking Challenges**

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

**Airport Way Rail Crossing Replacement**

**Planned Work**

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

**Project Schedule & Road Closure**

- Summer of 2024 – Exact project date to be determined
- Work window limited to minimize impact to traffic
- Example: Noon on a Thursday to 5 AM on a Friday
- Full road closure for the weekend
- Moon River RV Park – residents

**Saint Street Rail Crossing Replacement**

**Planned Work**

- Replace the railroad crossing with a grade separation
- Install lighted crossbucks

**Project Schedule & Road Closure**

- Summer of 2024 – Exact project date to be determined
- Work window limited to minimize impact to traffic
- Example: Noon on a Thursday to 5 AM on a Friday
- Full road closure for the weekend
- Battelle Blvd. and Kingsgate

**State Route 240 Rail Crossing Replacement**

**Planned Work**

- Replace the railroad crossing and grade separation
- Install lighted crossbucks

**Project Schedule & Road Closure**

- Summer of 2024 – Exact project date to be determined
- Work window limited to minimize impact to traffic
- Example: Noon on a Thursday to 5 AM on a Friday
- Full road closure for the weekend
- Moon River RV Park – residents

**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](http://PortofBenton.com/Projects)



# Thank You for Your Interest & Involvement!



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