



Project Wrap-up

Prosser Airport (\$40)

The Prosser Airport Improvement Project was completed in July. This project included replacing the entire electrical system, including the precision approach path indicator (PAPI) lights, runway end identifier lights (REIL), taxiway reflectors and a supplemental lighted wind cone. Additionally, crack repair and fog seal on asphalt were completed throughout the airport, along with new pavement markings.

This project was funded through a Federal Aviation Administration Airport Improvement Program grant and a 10% Port match.

Richland Airport (RLD)

The Richland Airport Apron Improvement Project is in the final stages of completion. This project provided better utilization of available space in the main apron area, expanded aircraft capacity on the apron, protects existing hangar buildings and strengthens pavement areas identified as having thin pavement.

Step toe Rail Crossing and Intersection Completed

The Step toe railroad crossing and intersection improvements were completed in September.

The project included a complete reconstruction of the intersection and railroad crossing and required significant coordination, problem-solving, and teamwork to bring it to completion.

Tapeal Properties, developer of the surrounding property, led the project, with the City of Richland serving as the lead agency and coordination involving the Port of Benton and City of Kennewick. Culbert Construction was the prime contractor, with several subcontractors also contributing to the project's successful completion.



Richland Airport Apron Improvement Project



Prosser Airport Lighting & Replacement Project

President's Message

As we enter the final quarter of 2026, I am proud to reflect on the progress the port has made this year. Guided by our mission to promote economic development, maintain critical infrastructure and enhance quality of life throughout Benton County, we have continued to make meaningful investments that will benefit the community for years to come.

This year has brought steady progress on several major infrastructure and transportation initiatives, including the completion of the Prosser Airport Pavement and Lighting Replacement Project and the Richland Airport Apron Improvement Project. Last month, the Steptoe Street rail crossing and intersection project was completed, benefiting the entire region for decades to come.

Additional infrastructure projects include pavement maintenance and repair on port roads and parking lots, roof repairs and tree trimming.

Important grant-funded projects continue to advance, improving transportation networks, supporting economic opportunities and strengthening regional competitiveness. Recent updates include progress on the Shore Power Electrification Project and planning for future rail and industrial development projects, which are supported by a combination of federal BUILD and CRISI grants, state capital funding and port match. Projects are expected to begin in early 2027, further strengthening the port's rail line.

Community engagement remains a cornerstone of our work. Attendance at Aviation Career Day & Job Fair nearly doubled this year, highlighting growing interest in aviation careers and workforce development opportunities. The Prosser Flag and Flight Festival welcomed hundreds of visitors to the Prosser Airport to see airplanes, hot air balloons and helicopters take flight — a wonderful community event.

Another recreation season has come to a close at Crow Butte Park. It was a great year of campers, boaters and recreation visitors from throughout the Pacific Northwest. While the campground season may have closed, planning continues for the future through the Crow Butte Master Plan and ongoing park improvements designed to enhance the visitor experience.

At USS Triton Sail Park, public interest remains stronger than ever and additional tours were added throughout the year to meet demand. Visitors from across the country, including passengers arriving through American Cruise Lines, have experienced the unique history of the USS Triton and the legacy preserved at the Sail Park.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without the dedication of our staff, Commissioners, tenants, partners and community members. Thank you for your continued support and collaboration.

Bill O'Neil
Commission President



The Port hosted a public tour on September 30. The tour included the Port's airports, rail, industrial facilities and tourism attractions.



The Port team spent the day with Port of Pasco and Pacific Northwest Waterways Association celebrating our rivers at the annual RiverFest event in Columbia Park.

RiverFest features exhibitors, vendors and entertainment to showcase the benefits of the Federal Columbia River Power System and highlight the four lower Snake River dams, including navigation, irrigation, recreation and power.

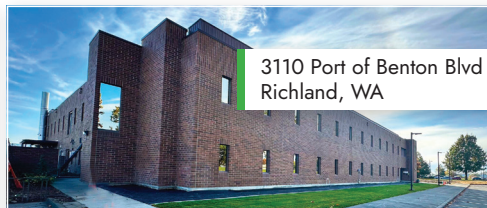
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- ✓ 47,900 SF of flexible office space
- ✓ 158 private offices
- ✓ Biotech/lab space

Contact Audrey Burney
Director of Properties

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Port Welcomes New Staff



Paul Brachvogel has joined the Port of Benton as General

Counsel, reporting to the Commission. He has been a practicing attorney since 1992. Over the course of his career, he has served as General Counsel, City Attorney, City Manager and in other legal and administration leadership roles for public utilities, ports, municipalities, school districts and private companies.



30TH ANNUAL

2026

ENTREPRENEURIAL AWARDS PROGRAM

This year marked the 30th anniversary of the Entrepreneurial Awards program, held October 20 and hosted by Richland Rotary and Fuse with presenting sponsor Strong Racing. Emceed by 2025 Sam Volpentest Entrepreneurial Leadership Award recipient Phil Ohl, the event honored entrepreneurs, businesses and community leaders making a lasting impact across the region.

Recipients included Café Con Arte, Just Juice, Big Bro Joe, Crowe Wines, Digital IT Solutions, Swagg Coffee Company, and Wild Olive's Charcuterie Kingdom. Two Sam Volpentest Leadership Awards, known as "Sammys," were presented to Ty Haberling of HFG Trust and Steve and Shirley Simmons of CG Public House & Catering.

Port Launches Project Review Portal

The Port recently launched a Project Review Portal at portofbenton.com/business-with-us/project-review-portal.

Obtaining proper permits and completing required reviews and inspections are essential steps in maintaining safety, compliance and quality for projects on Port property.

The web page covers all types of projects, including construction, utility installation, site improvement, building modification, traffic control

activity, or any other work on Port property.

The goal of the site is to provide a central location to submit requests and begin the Port review process.



2025 Financial Statement and Federal Audit Report

The 2025 financial statement and federal audit report was recently completed by the State Auditor's Office. The review examined both the port's financial statements and federal expenditures related to the 2025 Tie Replacement Project. The audit found no findings, reflecting the port's continued commitment to sound financial management and compliance.

The audit identified opportunities for improvement, including updating procurement policies to

align with federal requirements, reassessing fully depreciated capital assets, refining grant reporting practices and improving the overall efficiency of the audit reconciliation process.

As part of these improvements, staff will inventory and evaluate fully depreciated assets to determine whether assets should remain in service, have their useful lives adjusted, or be removed from records. The final audit report is available on the State Auditor's website.



Ron Branine

Interim Executive Director's Message

Welcome Fall! It doesn't seem possible that we have already begun the transition into fall and winter.

The atmosphere at the office is collaborative, positive and productive. Our team continues to move forward at a steady pace to

meet deadlines, complete projects and plan for the future.

We, along with our partners, completed the Steptoe Drive railroad crossing project this year, major projects at both Prosser and Richland Airports, and pavement maintenance throughout the district. Work continues on many others that will roll into the new year and further strengthen the facilities and infrastructure our community

relies on.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the port tenants and the community and regional partners who have given me such a warm and welcoming reception in this unexpected role I assumed this year. The guidance, encouragement and collaboration shown are a remarkable testament to why the Tri-Cities region continues to thrive through collaborative economic development efforts.

Lastly, I can't say enough about the incredibly talented team of professionals I get to work with every day. Their expertise, commitment and passion for serving our district make our accomplishments possible. With the team's dedication and our community partnerships, I am confident our best work is still ahead.



PORT OF
BENTON

Commissioners



Commissioner Bill O'Neil
President



Commissioner Scott D. Keller
Vice President



Commissioner Lori Stevens
Secretary

Executive Director



Diahann Howard, PPM®, PPX®



Port team with Chukar Cherries tour guide.

Chukar Cherries Visitor Experience

The Port team recently participated in Chukar Cherries' new visitor experience, gaining a firsthand look at how Chukar staff is creating meaningful connections with guests through storytelling, product sampling and behind-the-scenes insights into its operations.

The experience highlights Chukar Cherries' commitment to innovation, hospitality and the

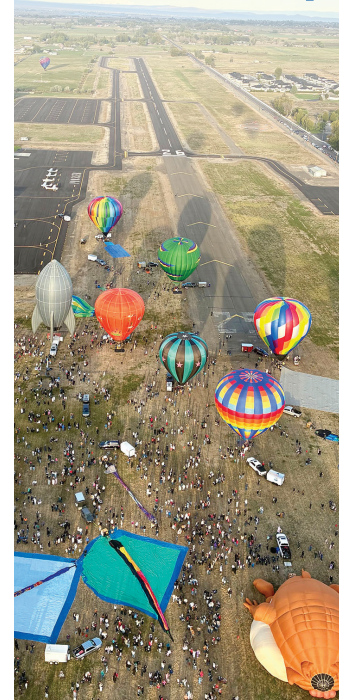
region's agricultural heritage while providing visitors with an engaging and memorable destination.

As a valued Port tenant, Chukar Cherries continues to invest in experiences that attract visitors, support tourism and showcase the quality products and entrepreneurial spirit that make our Port district unique.



Sign up for our eNews to receive general Port news and information at PortofBenton.com/News-Sign-Up.

Balloon Rally



The 37th Annual Great Prosser Balloon Rally was held September 25-27 at the Prosser Airport. The rally included sunrise launches, a night glow, media day and much, much more!