



PORT OF KENNEWICK REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING

APRIL 25, 2023 MINUTES

Commission Meeting recordings, with agenda items linked to corresponding audio, can be found on the Port's website at: <https://www.portofkennewick.org/commission-meetings-audio/>

Commission President Skip Novakovich called the Regular Commission Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting Teleconference.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ROLL CALL

The following were present:

Board Members: Skip Novakovich, President (via telephone)
Kenneth Hohenberg, Vice President (via telephone)
Thomas Moak, Secretary (via telephone)

Staff Members: Tim Arntzen, Chief Executive Officer (via telephone)
Tana Bader Inglima, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (via telephone)
Amber Hanchette, Director of Real Estate (via telephone)
Nick Kooiker, Chief Finance Officer (via telephone)
Michael Boehnke, Director of Operations
Lisa Schumacher, Special Project Coordinator
Bridgette Scott, Executive Assistant (via telephone)
Carolyn Lake, Port Counsel (via telephone)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lake led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Direct Deposit and E-Payments Dated April 18, 2023**
Direct Deposit and E-Payments totaling \$78,194.63
- B. Approval of Warrant Register Dated April 25, 2023**
Expense Fund Voucher Number 104706 through 104766 for a grand total of \$254,415.13
- C. Approval of Regular Commission Meeting Minutes April 11, 2023**
- D. Approval of Carbitex Lease Amendment; Resolution 2023-05**
- E. Approval of Energy Northwest IT Services Contract Amendment: Resolution 2023-06**

MOTION: Commissioner Hohenberg moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; Commissioner Moak seconded. With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously. All in favor 3:0.

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PRESENTATION

A. *City of Benton City SubArea Master Plan*

Mr. Arntzen introduced Benton City Mayor Linda Lehman and Michael Mehaffy of DPZ Partners who will be discussing the Benton City I-82 Sub-Area Plan.

Michael Mehaffy outlined the Benton City I-82 Sub-Area Plan (Exhibit A).

Mayor Lehman gave a brief description of the ongoing projects and potential areas the Port may assist the City with.

Mr. Arntzen and Mr. Peterson discussed the Benton City I-82 Sub-Area Plan and potential projects with Mayor Lehman and stated the 2023-2024 Budget was passed last year; however, if the Commission would like assist Benton City on a smaller project, there are funds available in the opportunity fund. Mr. Arntzen inquired if the Commission would like staff to continue working with Benton City on one of the smaller potential projects for the Benton City I-82 Sub-Area Plan.

The Commission, staff, and Mayor Lehman discussed the potential projects.

The Consensus of the Commission is for the Port to continue working with Benton City on a potential partnership project.

NEW BUSINESS

A. *Columbia Gardens Wayfinding Signage Contract Amendment*

Ms. Hanchette stated the Commission approved a contract with Ray Poland and Sons Inc. for the wayfinding signage project at Columbia Gardens on December 13, 2022. While Poland and Sons passed their required City inspection, the contract had additional special inspections for compaction, steel and concrete which were inadvertently missed. Meier Engineering reviewed the information provided by the Poland and Sons and recommended monitoring and remediation if needed. Resolution 2023-07 provides for an extended warranty related to post construction settling.

MOTION: *Commissioner Moak moved to approve Resolution 2023-07, approving a contract amendment with Poland and Sons Inc. to accept an extended warranty related to post construction settling of the Columbia Gardens wayfinding sign located adjacent to Columbia Drive in Columbia Gardens and further authorize the Port's Chief Executive Officer to execute all documents and agreements; and that all action by port officers and employees in furtherance hereof is ratified and approved; Commissioner Hohenberg seconded.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

Discussion:

Commissioner Hohenberg thanked Ms. Hanchette for bringing forth a proposal that is fair and meets the Port's standards. Commissioner Hohenberg fully supports Resolution 2023-07.

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Commissioner Novakovich stated Ms. Hanchette indicated that the details are currently being worked out and he thinks we have a very competent staff and legal counsel to take care of the amendment and he has a lot of faith and trust in staff to move forward.

With no further discussion, motion carried unanimously. All in favor 3:0.

REPORTS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Hybrid Work Plan

Mr. Arntzen presented Resolution 2023-08, which outlines the Hybrid Work Plan and directives (Exhibit B):

- Return to in-person and/or hybrid small group employee meetings;
- Implement limited open office hours;
- Institute fully hybrid Commission Meetings;
- Provide for in-person employee attendance at selective meetings and functions;
- Provide for staff work related travel.

MOTION: Commissioner Hohenberg moved to approve Resolution 2023-08 approving the Port of Kennewick's Hybrid Work Plan and further authorize the Chief Executive Officer to implement the Hybrid Work plan procedures; and that all action by port officers and employees in furtherance hereof is ratified and approved; Commissioner Novakovich seconded.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were made.

Discussion:

Commissioner Moak does not intend to repeat his comments from the previous meeting regarding attendance at the Commission Meetings; however, since the plan has not changed, he thinks the optics are very poor that the Port is not back to full Meetings. When you see what is going on, with people coming out of Covid, you expect folks will be full steam ahead and we are the one public agency that is not going to be full strength. Staff and Commission won't be at these meetings, and we are not going to be entertaining a lot of public at our Meetings. Commissioner Moak thinks the optics are bad and will not support this. The Manager has every right to determine what to do with staff, but from a Commission standpoint, it is the wrong thing to do.

Commissioner Hohenberg read through Resolution 2023-08 and had discussions with the CEO, and he believes nothing in this Resolution prevents Commissioners from attending our Meetings in person. The Commission Chambers is currently open and Commissioner Hohenberg plans on attending Commission Meetings in person, when he can. It also gives us the opportunity to continue to protect our staff, in spite of what we have gone through with Covid. People think we are through covid; however, we are not through Covid yet, and Commissioner Hohenberg knows people that have been recently diagnosed with Covid or diagnosed with long Covid and there may be someone or a family member, who has a compromised immune system. Our Commission Chambers are not huge and he would like to see more public come down to our Commission Meetings, but he thinks, as Mr. Peterson pointed out at one time, we actually had more public

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participation at times, because we have had people participate virtually. We created a hybrid system to ensure that Commissioners, whether they are ill or traveling, can still participate and be part of the Commission Meeting. From an elected official standpoint, Commissioner Hohenberg thinks when you raise your hand and take the oath, it is imperative to make yourself available, if you are in town, but there are times you may not be able to participate, and it is great to have the option to attend virtually. Commissioner Hohenberg fully supports this plan and as we move forward, the optics can appear one way or the other, depending on whether somebody has experienced Covid or challenges in their family in a different capacity. At the end of the day, the Commission Chambers are open, and he does not have any issues with being in Commission Chamber as an elected official.

With no further discussion, motion carried. All in favor 2 (Commissioners Hohenberg and Novakovich:1 Nay (Moak).

B. TRIDEC Dues

Mr. Arntzen gave a brief overview of the partnership with TRIDEC and the dues that the Port pays. Recently, the Port and TRIDEC signed an MOU for Vista Field joint recruitment efforts and Mr. Arntzen stated with the refocusing of TRIDEC's mission, there is a lot more common ground. With that in mind, Mr. Arntzen believes our dues structure should increase as the value of TRIDEC's services has increased.

Mr. Kooiker stated in 2016, the Port reduced the TRIDEC dues from \$30,000 to \$15,000. Staff is proposing a 2023 increase from \$20,000 to \$25,000 as our relationship with TRIDEC has significantly improved.

Commissioner Novakovich echoed Mr. Arntzen and Mr. Kooiker's comments and believes there is a huge difference in the TRIDEC leadership and staff leadership, and he thinks supporting TRIDEC and elevating their dues is a good thing.

C. Project Update

Mr. Arntzen gave a brief overview of projects that staff are currently working on.

D. Legislative Update

Commissioner Novakovich gave a brief review of the Washington State Legislature session and introduced Sean O'Brien, Eastern Washington Director for the Washington Policy Center for a debrief of the session.

Mr. O'Brien gave an update on the legislative session.

E. Commissioner Meetings (formal and informal meetings with groups or individuals)

Commissioners reported on their respective committee meetings.

F. Non-Scheduled Items

Ms. Lake thanked Ms. Hanchette for her work on the Columbia Gardens signage contract.

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Mr. Arntzen is working on a HEAIF presentation for a future Commission Meeting.

Mr. Arntzen is working with Mr. Kooiker on the City of Kennewick Vista Field Intersection funding, which will be presented at a later date.

Mr. Arntzen stated Port Wine Consultant, Ken Robertson, shared in his recent report that Victor Palencia's wine did very well in the Savor Northwest competition with his Palencia and Monarcha wines winning seven total gold medals, including two double gold medals and two Best of Class awards and several silver medals. Mr. Arntzen offered his congratulations to Mr. Palencia.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments were made.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

No comments were made.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to bring before the Board; the meeting was adjourned 3:39 p.m.

APPROVED:

PORT of KENNEWICK

BOARD of COMMISSIONERS

DocuSigned by:

Skip Novakovich

0E53A30E1C8E442...

Skip Novakovich, President

DocuSigned by:

Kenneth Hohenberg

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Kenneth Hohenberg, Vice President

DocuSigned by:

Thomas Moak

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Thomas Moak, Secretary

BENTON CITY I-82 SOUTH UPDATE * April 25, 2023

EXHIBIT A

DRAFT I-82 SOUTH SUBAREA PLAN BENTON CITY, WASHINGTON



Adopted via ORD #####

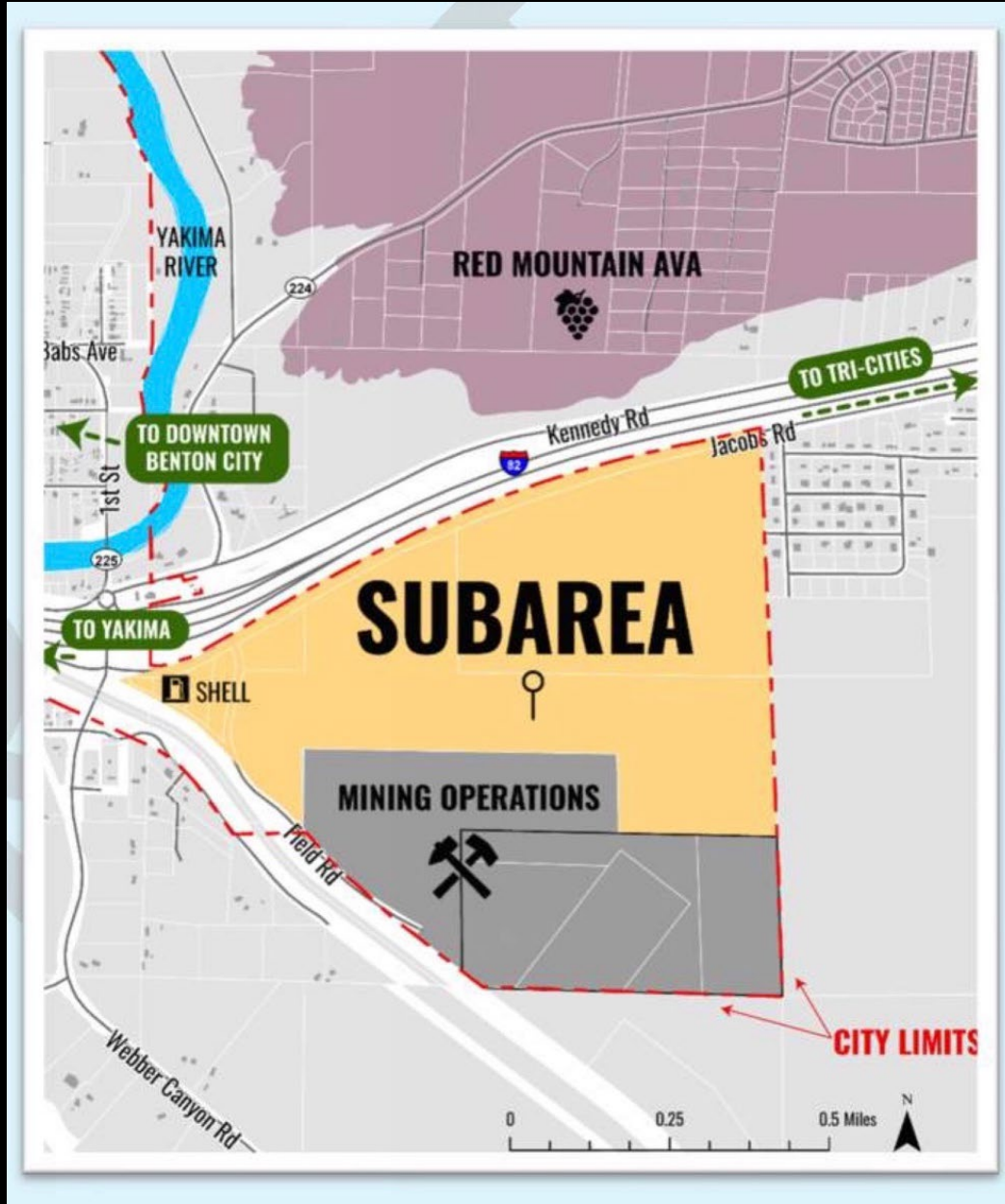
January XX, 2023

Prepared by AHBL, Inc.

For City of Benton City, WA

BENTON CITY I-82 SOUTH UPDATE * April 25, 2023

EXHIBIT A



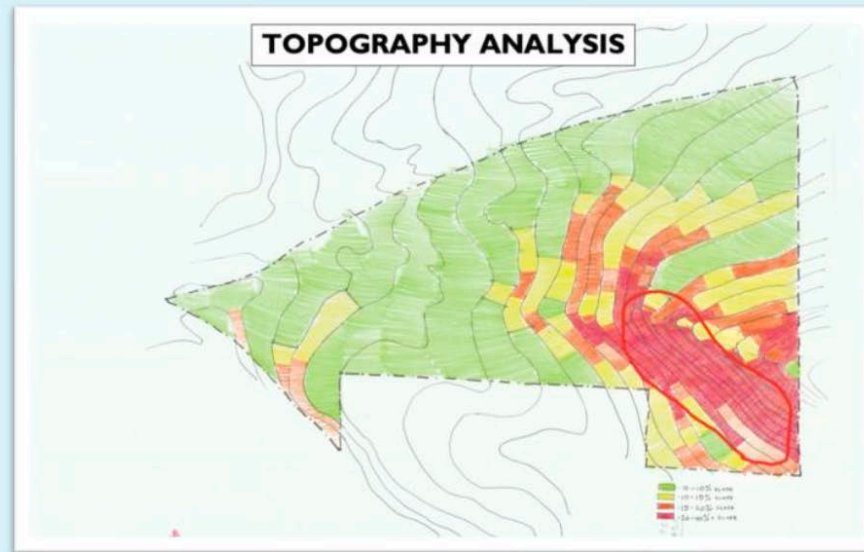


Figure 7 - Topographic Sketch Created during Charette Process

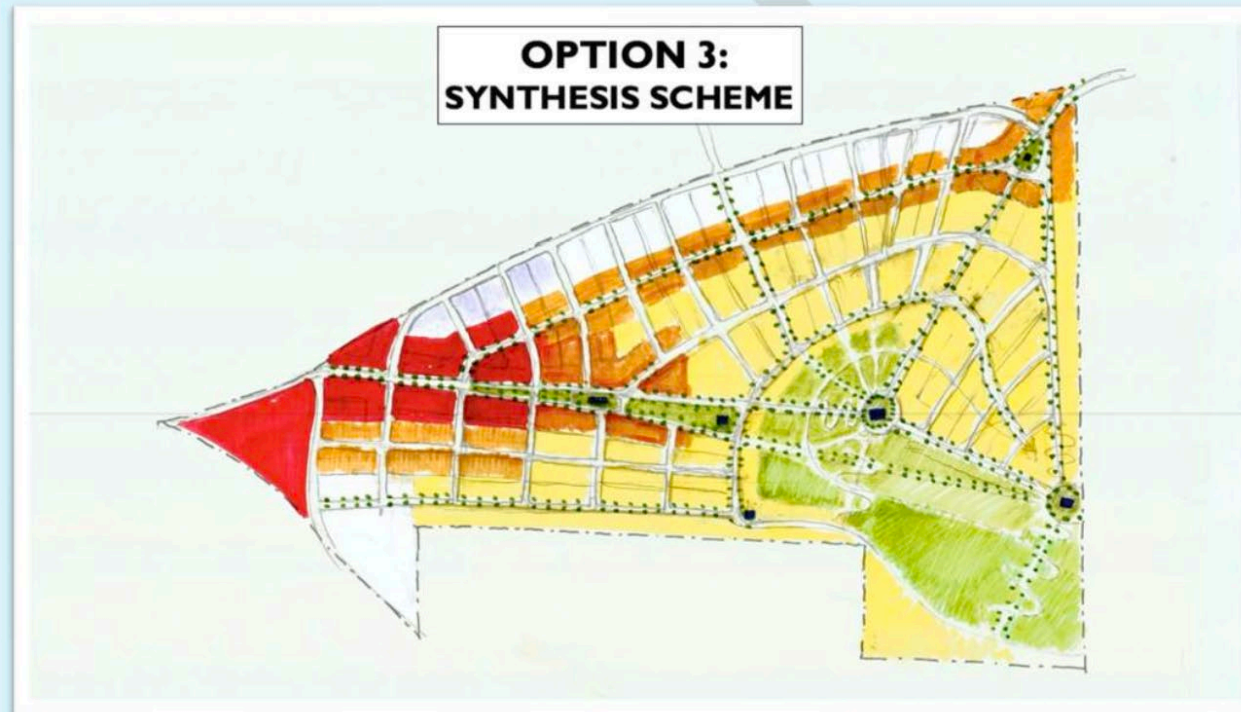


Figure 8- Charette Master Plan Scheme, Option 3

Figure 14 Street Map – CONCEPTUAL FUTURE MAP

EXHIBIT A

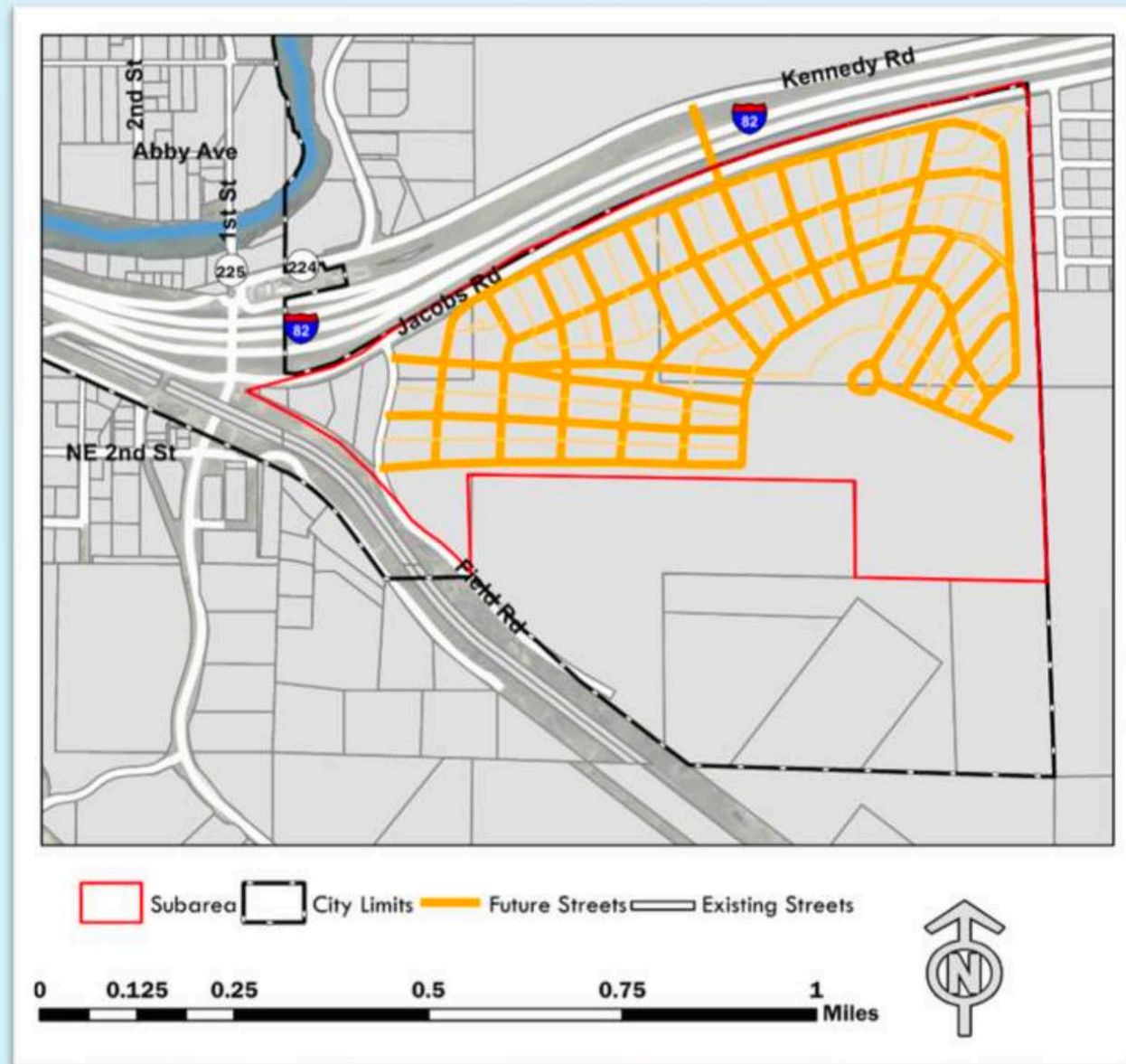
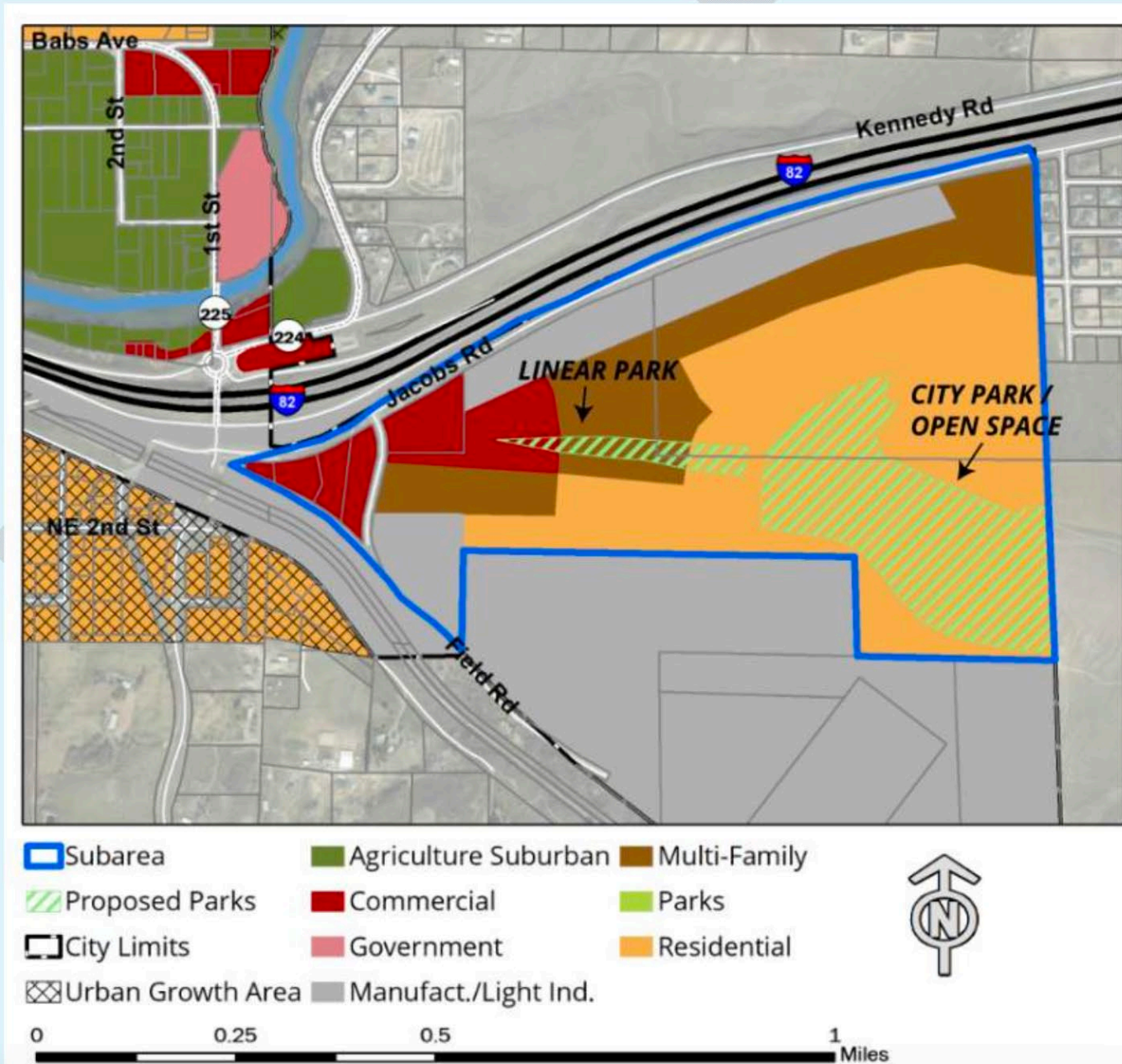


Figure 16- CONCEPTUAL FUTURE PARK MAP

EXHIBIT A



Other Benton City Projects

Bridge to Benton City Rails-to-Trails | Phase 2

Union Pacific Abandoned Railway Pedestrian & Bike Bridge Project

June 2022



Goal

Connect ~70 miles of Regional trail systems enhancing rural economic vitality and attracting recreation tourism from around the region and world

Opportunities

Acquire & restore abandoned Union Pacific Railway Bridge for pedestrians & bikes

Provide Demoss Road (County) access to Union Pacific Railway Bridge

Close 7 mile gap in Tapteal Greenway over land trail between Horn Rapids Park (County) and Hope Lane (Benton City)

Tapteal Greenway

30 miles over water trail
23 miles over land trail

Friends of Badger Mountain

15 - 20 Miles of ridge trails ending at Proposed River Crossing

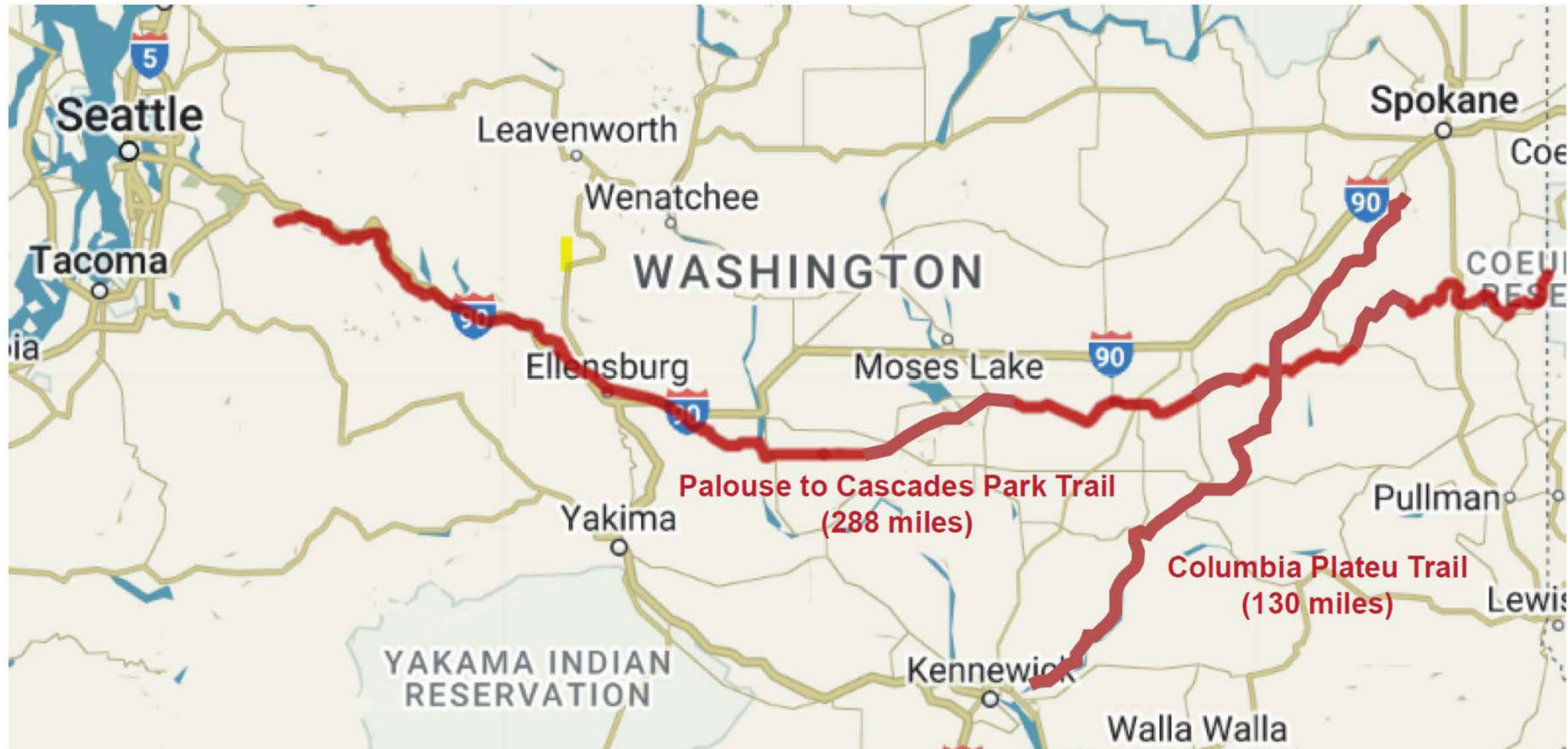
Sacagawea Heritage Trail

23 miles over land trail



Washington's Two Long Distance Trails

Close Proximity to the Tri-Cities Regional Trail System (Kennewick is nearest Map Point; See map Slide 3)



La Zeiba Event Center

EXHIBIT A





Areas of Potential Assistance from Port of Kennewick

- Update Parks and Recreation Plan to Include Subarea 8-10K**
- Update zoning map to include Subarea 3 - 5K**
- Train Staff to implement new design standards for City and Subarea. (Two different sets of design standards) 6-10K**
- Development of recruitment materials illustrating Subarea vision and concepts 10-15K**

Resolution 2023-08 EXHIBIT A**Memorandum (Amended)**

To: Port Commission
From: Tim Arntzen, POK CEO
Date: April 11, 2023
Re: Transitioning to a Hybrid Work Plan

Under various resolutions which have come before the commission, and in furtherance of a goal and objective the commission assigned to me, I have prepared the following DRAFT post-covid Hybrid Work Plan. A plan that I feel is focused on managing performance outcomes, intentional collaboration, and flexibility.

My thoughts set forth in this memo have been aided by robust discussion with port employees and legal counsel and a great deal of study regarding the evolving future of the workplace. I am deeply indebted to the port team and legal counsel for their assistance, and for the myriad white papers, articles, and current research focused on the evolving workplace and benefits of offering a human-centric work environment.

In fact, while researching the potential benefits and concerns of a work from home arrangement it became apparent that, beyond meeting necessary “life/health/safety” measures, a flexible work arrangement has notable benefits to both the organization and its employees, including allowing companies to attract and retain top talent more readily. And for those organizations with proactive and robust communications standards, working from home can foster a highly engaged workforce which performs better than those within a traditional office-only environment.

It was traditionally thought if a manager could see their employees in the office that meant they had productive employees; but *seeing people at their desk is just witness to their presence, not their productivity*. When managers are focused on goals and outcomes, employees can often be more productive working remotely. And when employees have fewer distractions (telephones, drop-in visitors, co-workers) they perform at a higher level.

Research has also indicated that employees will take fewer sick days if they are allowed to work from home: colds and food poisoning make going into an office miserable, but those who are mildly sick can still get work done most of the time if it means not having to go into the office. And those employees won’t spread their illness with others if they stay home!

In preparing this plan, it became apparent that this should not be considered a “post-Covid” work plan as much as it is a “new way of doing business” plan. Yes, Covid forced the remote work environment. However, during the past three years, we discovered numerous efficiencies, and we engaged new technologies that have allowed us to successfully conduct the public’s business and effectively run the port.

I am proud of the way the port responded to the Covid pandemic. As the port's legal counsel has advised the commission in past resolutions, I, as port CEO, have a legal duty to protect employee health and welfare at all times, not just during a pandemic. And we did just that. In fact, during staff discussions, several employees indicated they directly benefitted from not being required to be physically present.

Our current remote work plan was focused on keeping our employees and the public safe. And we supported personal liberty by not requiring employees to submit to vaccinations as a requirement of employment—a position that offered flexibility and understanding, and ensured employees could sustain their own convictions in making personal healthcare decisions. It is important to note that there is now mounting medical evidence indicating significant negative effects related to Covid vaccinations in some people—which strongly supports the wisdom of allowing personal liberty related to personal health decisions. Again, this type of information must be considered when making decisions and formulating an evolving workplace policy.

The port has a camera in the commission chambers and full remote commission meeting accessibility. As observed by several staff members, “while the public can now attend commission meetings live, usually no one shows up.” People seem to enjoy the ability to “Zoom” in, and the ability to attend remotely has increased public participation in meetings. Given that people have embraced technology and the systems are already in place; and, given the commission's desire for continued transparency, I believe there is an expectation that we will continue offering the ability to engage online. And I believe our employees feel a hybrid work environment will continue to benefit both them and the port.

In fact, some think we are more accessible now. As one employee shared, when he is on vacation, but needs to be “present” for an important topic, he can do that. Previously that participation wasn't possible without the transition to remote work and the investment in technological improvements that have already been made.

Another person noted that the pandemic proved how dynamic the port is; staff had a week or two to figure out how to get everyone remote and we did that remarkably well. The port was, and still is, ahead of most agencies in its response to Covid. And because the port has learned much about doing business remotely, the question was posed, “Since we have the tools in place and we've been successful, why would we go back to the way it was before?”

Another observation was that the port received its greatest level of public participation—during Covid—for the Waterfront Master Plan—using technology to remotely engage the public via surveys and Zoom meetings. More than 2,000 comments were offered online versus the previous high-water mark of 200 in-person attendees for Vista Field master planning (which in itself was a record!)

Other team members shared, “Sometimes, it seemed we used to attend meetings for the sake of meetings, and now we don't have as many random meetings.”

In addition, the commission will undoubtedly recognize that the employees' comments cited in the Appendix to this memo are a testament to the enhanced feeling of personal medical safety under our current protocols.

On the downside of working remotely, there were some who missed in-person engagement, and some who missed small group in-person opportunities, and others who expressed concern about sustaining morale and our corporate culture remotely.

Conclusion:

Covid came upon us rapidly and unannounced. Our port was among the first nationally to recognize the potential severity of the approaching pandemic, and one of the very first organizations locally to cancel events and transition employees to a remote work environment. Our port instituted early and robust Covid compliance and social distancing procedures. These procedures were and continue to be designed to protect the commission, the staff, and the public at large. And truthfully, the port endured some early community criticism for taking such swift and proactive action. Ironically, those who initially criticized the port eventually instituted similar measures to protect public health. They just did it later.

In the three years since the onset of Covid, and under our remote work plan, it has been demonstrated and accepted that Port of Kennewick has been as effective as ever. And there is staff consensus that, in fact, the port is more efficient now than it was prior to Covid. Technological advances employed by the port, together with increased employee productivity have created a "New Work Paradigm." Instead of our port's productivity suffering, it increased.

Our port has always been a leader in our community, whether it comes to its visionary public projects—or its visionary response to a global pandemic. Put bluntly, our port has been a leader, not a follower. And personally, I hope that our port will continue to be an innovator, and I hope that we recognize there are new ways of doing business. Surely there will be some who criticize. There always is.

Nevertheless, I believe that our formulation of a Hybrid Work Plan should consider our new knowledge. Therefore, in moving forward, a new paradigm Hybrid Work Plan could be something like this:

1. Return to In-Person Small Group Employee Meetings

Re-institute in-person employee conferences in the commission chambers. In-person meetings will be on a voluntary basis with each employee, in consultation with their manager or the CEO, having discretion to determine whether the person desires to meet in person (based on personal medical conditions). These employee meetings would take place on days that the port office is open to the public.

2. Implement Limited Open Office Hours.

While it has been undisputed that the port has remained effective and responsive to the public's needs under the remote work plan, I suggest that the port establish some "open office" hours. Office hours could be designated as Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 am to 4 pm. These days have been selected because Tuesday would be consistent with commission meeting days, and Thursdays would allow additional public access and an

opportunity to prepare for expanded use of and activity at port facilities during weekends. Thursdays typically require the highest level of engagement with marina tenants, especially during spring, summer, and early fall.

For safety concerns I would require at least two port employees to be in the office during open office hours for safety and security reasons. And, to provide for continued safety of employees when a minimal workforce is on site, the port may choose to implement additional security protocols such as an interactive front door camera and bell.

3. Institute Fully Hybrid Commission Meetings.

A modified hybrid system could be employed, consisting of one commission meeting per month being conducted remotely, and the other conducted in-person. Commission attendance at in-person meetings would be on a voluntary basis. In-person commission meetings could occur under the following conditions:

- a. Each attending commissioner would be seated six feet apart from others.
- b. Employee attendance would be limited to one person to operate the equipment and one other employee, likely the CEO or his delegate.
- c. Public participation would continue to be either in-person or remote. For in-person attendance, seating would be limited as appropriate and consistent with Washington state Labor and Industries guidance¹, with each seat six feet apart from other seats.
- d. With the exception of 3a (above) all employees necessary for the meeting would attend remotely (audio and visual); and
- e. The above plan could be implemented beginning June 1, 2023, and would be re-evaluated on October 1, 2023, or as necessary.
- f. To ensure full transparency for the public in conducting such in-chambers meetings, and to accommodate the above requirements, the “start date” would be dependent upon making necessary audio-visual adjustments within commission chambers and addressing other technical logistics.

4. Provide for In-Person Employee Attendance at Select Meetings and Functions

Allow for in-person attendance at meetings and functions as approved by the CEO or his delegate on a case-by-case basis (willing participant).

5. Provide for Staff Work-Related Travel

Allow in-person travel to meetings, conferences and events as approved by the CEO or his delegate on a case-by-case basis (willing participant).

6. Publish Plan Upon Adoption

The port will ensure significant publication and promotion of the plan upon adoption to ensure general knowledge of port open office hours, staff availability, and transparency in operations. This would include website, newsletters, media release, posting notice on the front door, outgoing voice message, and direct notice via established mailing lists, etc.

¹ Washington State’s public health emergency proclamations for COVID-19 ended on October 31, 2022; however, COVID-19 is still a recognized workplace hazard that employers must address pursuant to Washington state Labor and Industries. <https://www.lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-topics/topics/coronavirus#requirements-and-policies>.

Appendix (Amended)

Work Models Listening Sessions Summary

Remote/Hybrid/Return to Office

Captured by Rochelle Olson & Tim Arntzen, CEO February through April 2023

Port Effectiveness During COVID/Remote Work Conditions

“The pandemic proved how dynamic the port is. We had a week or two to figure out how to get everyone remote. We were ahead of most agencies, thankfully. And the cyber event made us even more robust and prepared.”

“Just because COVID emergencies are over, did we not learn some lessons from this? How can we be most productive? Can we keep working online and not have a bunch of bodies in the building just because that is the way it's always been done? Do we use the tools we now have or go back the way it was?”

“I think we've been extremely effective. Once everything was set up in remote offices, I spent all my day on the computer/phone and was as productive or more productive. There were missed opportunities like Chamber functions, etc., where we had past visibility.”

“I get up very early and start working. So now I don't have to wait until 9 a.m. to begin work. As a team, we've found ways to adapt. The new phone system seemed like the final step we needed to fully enable remote work.”

“Facilities are 100% occupied. That shows that we're still maintaining operations. I've been remote for 7 ½ years, it does increase productivity for me, and I'm not distracted.”

Accessibility To the Public/Tenants

“We now have cameras in our Commission room and other ways to engage with the public using the tools and lessons we learned over the past few years.”

“We found ways for bill payments and other functions. Everyone learned to do things differently. People can come to commission meetings live – but no one shows up. People still want to Zoom in, and the attendance is higher.”

“I think we are more accessible. I could attend a Commission meeting while I was on vacation to present on an important topic – that wouldn't have been possible without the transition to remote work.”

“We had hardly anyone attend in person at 2 p.m. on a Tuesday afternoon. We have far more participation online by people who want to hear or speak on a matter for 3 minutes. We now have more public engagement, so why wouldn't we keep the ability for people to join online?”

“With the front-door camera operating, we can speak with people who stop by the office.”

“With the new phone system, we're able to answer and transfer calls and do all our normal business. We make appointments to meet people in person when needed.”

“Remote work is effective depending on the department. Tenants were still working in their offices. We could provide a lot of support over the phone, which worked out fine. Not many tenants needed to meet in person – lease renewals were done over the phone.”

“Ninety percent of foot traffic business could be done remotely. We set up mechanisms that allow business to be conducted remotely versus coming into the office.”

“Thursdays are currently busier for customer engagement than Fridays as everything is done electronically now. We’ve been managing the marina electronically for three years and everything that guests or tenants need is available at guest moorage locations and available online, as well as the kiosk with a QR Code for information. We do not accept electronic payments, so payments can be dropped off in the drop box. If assistance is needed, we are available via phone or appointments if required. Besides, Friday’s require bank deposits and monthly billings and stocking and preparing facilities for weekend use, Thursday hours would offer opportunities for better customer interface on a day they are most likely to seek assistance”.

“More people engaged with and commented on the Kennewick Historic Waterfront District Master Plan because it was done online/differently during COVID.”

“We received the greatest response electronically and through surveys and Zoom meetings for the Kennewick Historic Waterfront District Master Plan – over 2,000 comments from people. The high watermark previously was 200 people who attended night meetings. But by asking for feedback online, we had unprecedented participation.”

Ways The Port Has Become More Effective/Productive Working Remotely

“We do DocuSign now, GoToMeeting, Zoom and WebEx/VOIP. So, a big increase in productivity. And soon, we’ll move to Laserfiche, which will make us more productive. We can better track signatures too.”

“Sometimes, we used to have meetings for the sake of meetings, and now we don’t have as many random meetings. And there are fewer community meetings to attend.”

“Consultants aren’t flying in anymore. We’re meeting with companies remotely. Remote meetings are easier to attend and give the public more access to the port. Remote meetings are also easier as employees to attend.”

“I would never have been able to reduce our records management inventory by half if it wasn’t for working from home.”

“Few people could predict COVID or how impactful it would be worldwide. Big businesses, and small businesses, all around the world are facing the same issues we are. Many technologies we use today didn’t exist four years ago. These worldwide tech advancements are due to an emergent need. We’ve invented procedures, processes, technologies that you can’t take away.”

“One change is the old-school management of people. I used to arrive at a certain time to be seen so the manager knew I was there. Now, we’re relying on the other employees to be out there and doing the work without micromanaging them. It’s a new culture. People can show up early and have more flexibility. At first, I had a hard time not having people know what I was doing – and no one checking in with me.”

"We are more green (environmentally responsible). We aren't traveling as much, so with lower carbon emissions, we've reduced our carbon footprint. We could look at bills to see if they are cost savings for the port since we're not there daily."

"I can get and keep the best team possible by being as flexible as possible. We are far more competitive in attracting and keeping talent with these policies, but it's also smart. People can go anywhere to make money. But it's a competitive advantage for the port to let employees work and stay at home."

Negative Aspects You've Experienced Related To Port Operations/Effectiveness Working Remotely

"After COVID, I realized I like people more than I thought I did. But I think the days talking around the water cooler about kids are behind us, and there just isn't as much time consumed talking because we're remote."

"The fading of connection with my coworkers as individuals. We can still talk about tasks or ask for updates, but there is something to seeing smiling faces and hearing about families. Having a little bit of a personal connection with co-workers is beneficial."

"We've lost some of the ability to be in a room and share ideas. There are about 10% of meetings where being in the same room versus taking the screen share back and forth would be good."

"The political pressure is a negative. As an elected official, you need to be aware of what the community is saying. Some ask why the port team isn't back in the office full-time. The question that must be asked: Who will decide if we will open fully or have a hybrid arrangement? Will the decisionmaker be the Commissioners or the CEO?"

"I experienced pushback at a local city council meeting. A city employee said, 'I heard you guys really locked yourself down.' So, there is some pressure."

"We're morphing from the old culture of managing desk time versus productivity. Tim has done a great job building a good corporate culture and a team that works well together. I worry about new people coming on board and if that will change with us all working remotely."

Return To Office Concerns And Effect On Some Port Employees And/or Family Members More Susceptible To The Negative Impacts Of COVID

"Limited office space for new hires is a real issue if we're all in the office. And remodeling or adding new offices is expensive, which is a real problem as we slowly grow over time."

"Unfortunately, many of us have had to become caregivers. It's one hell of a commitment on the part of the employee. If we can make it easier on everyone, it benefits the port. People can be better – we can be better ports – if we loosen the reins and trust the employees."

"Returning to the office would make it very difficult to take care of my sick parents right now. I would have likely retired if I didn't have this flexibility to take care of family."

"I will be out of the office for six weeks, and I'm grateful to be able to work remotely."

"I appreciated Tim's conservative approach for the last few years. I had a parent with dementia in a facility that you couldn't go in if you had any sickness. I also have a 91-year-old mother-in-law who I want to keep seeing. It's been a blessing not to get sick. For the last few years, I

haven't even caught a cold, let alone COVID. I appreciate your approach, Tim."

"I like knowing that the people I work with aren't negatively impacting their family members' health."

"Not being in the office and catching every bug reduces medical expenses for every employee. It's nice to be able to stay home and not get sick – because I'm a caregiver to ill relatives. Not getting sick during the last few years was a big benefit and blessing. And I can still work remotely while caring for relatives, so I don't have to miss work."

"I can't share your personal information with Commissioners. So, what is prudent under the circumstances? If we can create a uniform policy, that will benefit all employees. Based on what I know, I need to safeguard the work environment. I'm privy to some facts that tell me I need to take those obligations seriously."

Ideas For A "Covid Plan" Or "Next 24-Months" Work Plan

"To me, it's not a COVID plan. We use the word "reopening," but there is far more involved than COVID. To me, the plan must have flexibility. We've put all these technologies and efficiencies in place, and it would be a waste not to keep taking advantage of them."

"I don't view it as flipping a light switch on and off because it doesn't need to be where we return to exactly as we were before COVID. I don't envision it being a hard onsite/offsite decision but more of a hybrid. I save 45 minutes of drive time that I don't have to do, so I have more productive hours."

"I don't think we should call it a COVID plan. Over the next 24-month period, I'd like to keep working how we are now. If I need to come in, I do."

"Let's talk about productivity as an organization and forget about that there is COVID or the seasonal flu/cold. Take the pandemic away and are we going to revert to the less effective model?"

"What we are doing now seems to be working well. I won't mind if we designate coming in for staff meetings because there are some teambuilding benefits to having people together on occasion. So, we should think about how to build in teambuilding and comradery, or we will lose that. Also, those times together would help our new team members and future hires transition into our culture."

"At most, limited office hours are open for our Marina tenants. Maybe Friday afternoons or whenever new Marina tenants are coming down to sign up for new slips. Retain a work-from-home practice generally, allowing people to come to the building if they feel safe."

"I'm hesitant to have doors unlocked due to safety issues."

"There are an increasing number of active shooter issues, and I'm hesitant to have the doors unlocked with unfettered access with just one employee here. Maybe a buddy system. We have a heightened duty to protect employees irrespective of COVID. Maybe we keep the office locked?"

"When I go to Richland's City Hall or my children's elementary schools, you can't just wander around."

"Only meet quarterly in the Commission room – but keep all Commission meetings online. And

encourage our staff meetings to be in person every two weeks in conjunction with our commission meetings.”

“I like the hybrid work approach we have now. I like that we can have everyone in person on occasion for meetings. And we have options. If you’re not feeling well, you stay home. No questions asked. Before COVID, I wouldn’t stay home.”

“I agree that Tuesday and Thursday hours make sense. Fridays are typically the slowest days regarding marina, phone calls, and meetings. And hopefully, this year, when we start automating the entire marina process, it will make things even easier. Open hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays would also relieve any scheduling conflicts with vacations, which are usually Mondays/Fridays.”

“I’d still come in if I weren’t feeling well, but not really sick yet. And we’d pass sicknesses around. Remote work has allowed us to be healthier and more productive, and we’re not taking as much PTO off seasonally.”

“Whatever our plan looks like going forward, considerations should include the following:

1. What is reasonable medically?
2. What have we learned business-wise and from employees?
3. What is feasible politically.”

Thoughts On Making A Policy Too Restrictive Or Loose

“You can always ease up on restrictions. If we start a bit tighter/more controlled, we can ease into it. It’s better to be cautious to start so everyone doesn’t get sick; err on the side of caution.”

“Let’s ease up on prohibitions about not being able to attend meetings/presentations. Those concerned about their health don’t need to do that. We can make accommodations. Those who want to give presentations or go to City Council meetings can. Maybe not 1,000 people at the convention center but go to City Council meetings of other partners.”

“We must change with the times. If we require people to sit at desks for 8 hours a day, we’ll lose people. Now I can walk Badger at lunch. I have flexibility, so I am more productive and can take care of my children in the morning.”