



Vision2050

PORT OF OLYMPIA

CONSOLIDATED REPORT

2020-2025

In 2018, the Port launched Vision 2050, a 14-month community engagement process and action plan endorsed by the Commission to ensure that Port investments align with community priorities. This report takes a look at the Port's progress over the last five years in meeting the priorities identified in Vision 2050.

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A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP



ALEX SMITH
Executive Director

The Port of Olympia was created in 1922 to secure public control of the waterfront, and to contribute to job creation, community connection and economic prosperity in Thurston County. For the last 103 years, the Port has been working to fulfill these goals as the community has grown and community priorities have evolved.

In 2018, the Port embarked on its broadest outreach and engagement effort in the Port's history with Vision 2050—a 14-month process to reach out and learn about community priorities, resulting in a detailed report on the community's shared goals and priorities for the Port.

The Port Commission unanimously adopted Vision 2050 "as the organizational focus for the future," and directed Port staff to implement Vision 2050 through five year updates and annual action plans.

Between 2020 and 2025, despite a pandemic and staff turnover at the Port, we made progress toward Vision 2050's goals, which are summarized here. We look forward to engaging the Commission and community as we develop our action plans for the next five years to continue implementing this community's priorities.

COMMISSIONERS

Jasmine Vasavada

District One



Bob Iyall

District Two



Amy Evans Harding

District Three



Maggie Sanders

District Four



Sarah Montano

District Five



VISION 2050

A community-informed action plan for our future

In 2018, the Port launched **Vision 2050**, a 14-month community engagement process and action plan endorsed by the commission to ensure that Port investments align with community priorities.

We engaged with over **1700 people in Thurston County** through surveys, focus groups, online and in-person events.

Our 27-person Task Force reviewed over **10,000 ideas and comments** from community members and organized them under three primary focus areas:

- Marine Terminal, Waterfront and Community Assets
- Business Development, Infrastructure and Real Estate
- Sustainability, Administration, Communications and Engagement

Port of Olympia Resolution 2019-08

The resolution adopted Vision 2050 as the organizational focus for the future of the Port Peninsula



PORT OF OLYMPIA VISION 2050

VISION STATEMENT



The community's
vision for the Port

and what we aspire to achieve

“

The Port is a trusted community institution that actively engages and communicates with the public it serves. It fulfills its primary role as Thurston County's economic engine by stimulating investment, fostering entrepreneurship, and facilitating transportation and commerce regionally and internationally.

It is recognized as a cutting-edge leader in sustainable operations. It manages gathering places, recreational venues and other assets that enhance sense of place, and coordinates with partners on critical challenges and opportunities.

”

MARINE TERMINAL



Vision 2050 Goal: Preserve and enhance Thurston County's working waterfront and connection to global trade by diversifying marine terminal operations, improving communication and securing community support.

The Port's working waterfront played an important role in keeping essential cargo moving during the pandemic and partnering with local organizations to support urgent housing needs. Throughout this time period, the marine terminal also continued to work towards environmental and sustainability goals and provide information and outreach to the community about the value of a working waterfront.

HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

* During the pandemic, the Port was able to leverage its unique infrastructure to meet cargo, consumer and humanitarian needs due to disruption in the supply chain that led to canceled sailings, port delays and container shortages. In 2020, 35 vessels came to the Port of Olympia carrying essential cargo.

* At the height of the pandemic, the marine terminal opened its facility to a local organization to construct 40 tiny homes to meet the needs of the houseless community in Thurston County.

* Following the pandemic, the Port restarted its public tours of the marine terminal as part of our ongoing effort to share information about the role of the working waterfront and how marine terminal operations benefit and impact the community.

* The marine terminal continued to achieve sustainability goals throughout this five-year period by meeting stormwater benchmarks for more than three consecutive years, participating in the Green Marine environmental certification program, extracting and treating contaminated groundwater at the Cascade Pole Site, and assessing and utilizing lower carbon emissions equipment when possible.



In 2021, the Marine Terminal offered space in its warehouse to Earth Home, a local organization committed to creating tiny homes for the houseless community in Thurston County.

SWANTOWN MARINA & BOATWORKS

Vision 2050 Goal: Make investments and improvements that ensure Swantown Marina and Boatworks remain a premier and priority destination for visitors and tenants alike.

In the wake of the pandemic, Swantown Marina focused on resilience and strategic growth to remain a competitive and valued regional destination and community asset. Ongoing advertising campaigns, signature events like Movies at the Marina and participation in regional promotions such as the Seattle Boat Show helped attract new visitors and boost marina visibility.

Investments in infrastructure and environmental compliance, including the ongoing operation of a ethanol-free fuel dock, continued support for the derelict vessel removal program, and the installation of a secondary stormwater filtration system at Boatworks, positioned Swantown as a leader in marina sustainability.



Swantown Fuel Dock

\$1M
Gallons of Fuel

Since
Opening
In 2017

HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * Approved addition of secondary stormwater filtration system to Boatworks which has led to more vendors and contractors selecting Swantown over other marinas.
- * Partnered with Freedom Boat Club, Olympia Area Rowing, Olympia Community Sailing and Harbor Days to strengthen community engagement, access to water and youth programming.
- * Continued regional outreach efforts including participation at the Seattle Boat Show and targeted outreach to increase yacht club group reservations.
- * Continued to maintain and operate an ethanol-free fuel dock, 7 days a week, as a much-needed service to the boating community.

DESTINATION WATERFRONT

Goal: Turn the Port Peninsula into a premier waterfront destination

Transforming the Port Peninsula by adding attractions, increasing accessibility and maintaining a clean and safe environment, is one of the long-term goals identified by community and staff in the 2050 visioning process. The commission supports this vision, solidifying the concept with its unanimous March 22, 2021 motion:

"The Commission acknowledges the community input given to this vision for the development of a Destination Waterfront and recognizes that staff will use this vision to continue to build partnerships, market Port properties, and develop project proposals for Commission consideration."



\$50K

Department of Commerce
grant to initiate planning

Public Engagement

**29-Member
Advisory
Group**

**468 Public
Meeting
Participants**

**4 Public
Outreach
Meetings**

**2 Community
Surveys**

HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * In 2020, assembled a Destination Waterfront Citizens Advisory Sub-Committee, appointed by the Commission, and an advisory group of local businesses and community stakeholders.
- * In 2021, Port of Olympia Commission passed a land use vision for the future development of Destination Waterfront.
- * Obtained a Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) grant to support the development of Destination Waterfront.
- * Partnered with a team of architects and engineers to develop a waterfront concept that involved outreach and input from 450 community members in Thurston County.
- * In 2025, launched a solicitation of interest for a Waterfront Center at Site D, one of the sites consistent with Vision 2050 goals to attract tenants and developers.

REAL ESTATE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



DID YOU KNOW

Port of Olympia manages 94 ground and building leases on Port properties

Vision 2050 Goal: Leverage the Port's unique statutory authority to catalyze economic opportunities in partnership with local jurisdictions and economic development organizations.

With Vision 2050 as its road map, the Port strategically invested in real estate projects and initiatives to support sustainable agriculture and small and emerging businesses, drive green energy innovation and advance economic growth.

Key projects included the Westman Mill mixed-use development—featuring 86 residential units and 8,500 sq. ft. of commercial space on restored East Bay land—and significant infrastructure investments, which created site-ready options for commercial and light industrial tenants, helping attract businesses that may have otherwise looked elsewhere.

HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * Drove economic revitalization in Tumwater by facilitating the lease and renovation of two derelict hotels and selling long-vacant Cleanwater Centre buildings, transforming underutilized assets into revenue-generating spaces now supporting 10 emerging businesses.
- * Bolstered economy by leasing property to diverse industries including agriculture, aviation, food processing and storage and manufacturing.

- * Supported our ongoing partnership with the City of Olympia by selling Port property to enable the expansion of the Hands On Children's Museum.
- * Invested in green energy alternatives by installing four electric vehicle charging stations at the Farmers Market and upgrading properties to adhere to state green energy alternatives when leases are up for renewal.

AIRPORT

Goal: Maximize the economic and community value of the Olympia Regional Airport in accordance with airport master plan and FAA regulations.

Over the past five years, Olympia Regional Airport has evaluated a range of development proposals and partnerships aimed at strengthening its role in both national and regional aviation systems. These efforts included pursuing aviation-related projects as well as non-aviation manufacturing opportunities that align with the City of Tumwater's Comprehensive Plan and the draft Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan.

Airport leadership continued to advance strategic projects that enhance economic resilience and environmental sustainability, further cementing Olympia Regional Airport's value as a vital community asset.



2020-2025

5,147

Flight Hours of Washington State Patrol Missions

2,819

Patients Transported on Medical Flights via Airlift Northwest

HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * Reaffirmed commitment in the 2021 Airport Master Plan Update (pending commission approval) to strengthen critical community services, including medical flight operations via Airlift Northwest, wildfire response through the Department of Natural Resources and public safety support through Washington State Patrol.
- * Purchased a fuel tank to set the stage to become one of the first airports in the state to provide unleaded aviation fuel.
- * Continued to Identify and implement best practices for airfield maintenance to align with the draft Habitat Conservation Plan.
- * Explored options in emerging technology such as electric aircraft opportunities, participated in an FAA solar airfield lighting study and replaced incandescent runway lighting with energy efficient LED fixtures.

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Vision 2050 Goal: Emphasize sustainability in all planning and actions and provide regular updates to the community.

In the past five years, our Environmental Programs and Planning Department has developed into a robust team of environmental experts in sustainability, remediation, restoration and regulatory best practices.

Investing in environmental programs and initiatives is a high priority for the Port of Olympia as we strive to not only meet, but surpass, environmental compliance and sustainability goals.



HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * Awarded \$12M in grant funding and \$5M in State Legislative appropriation for the Budd Inlet sediment investigation. Completed sediment testing in East and West Bays.
- * Advanced climate initiatives on multiple fronts. Joined Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, formed the Sea Level Rise Collaborative with the City of Olympia and LOTT Clean Water Alliance and proactively integrated sea level rise considerations into Port development planning.
- * Revised the draft Brush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan to balance urban growth and the preservation of endangered species on Port properties within the City of Tumwater.
- * Achieved five consecutive years of stormwater compliance at the marine terminal and exceeded Green Marine certification benchmarks
- * Improved communication and transparency by increasing outreach and education in the community and establishing an Environmental Blog Series.

Budd Inlet Sediment Samples Collected

1100

East Bay

1300

West Bay

ADMINISTRATION

Vision 2050 Goal: Improve the Port's ability to make decisions, resolve issues, achieve its objectives and mission and implement Vision 2050 recommendations to become an innovative economic development leader.

While advancing the successful development and implementation of Vision 2050, Port leadership navigated significant challenges, from the operational impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to transitions within its executive team.

In 2024, newly appointed Executive Director Alex Smith rejuvenated staff morale and focus with an organizational assessment that helped realign the Port with Vision 2050 goals.



HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025



Increased from a three- to five-member commission to provide more equitable representation to the community.



Improved commission meetings by streamlining the decision-making process at meetings, updating the cover memo for meeting packets and adding a virtual meeting option to make it easier for the public to participate.



Worked on developing best practices to improve budget transparency such as creating a list of goals during the budget planning process that explain how each budget item aligns with Vision 2050.



Established a best practice to review and update essential port content, past and present, to align with Vision 2050 goals, including website materials, planning documents, internal port policies and capital budget white papers.



Strengthened communication and trust between commission and staff by organizing annual retreats, holding trust-building training, involving commission members in community events and providing more communication touchpoints including weekly email updates, a monthly internal staff email and an external community newsletter.

FINANCE & FUNDING

Vision 2050 Goal: Develop a long-term finance strategy that supports the Port's mission and responsibility to generate sustainable economic and community development.

In the last five years, the Port has diligently worked towards a long-term finance strategy that supports sustainable economic and community development.

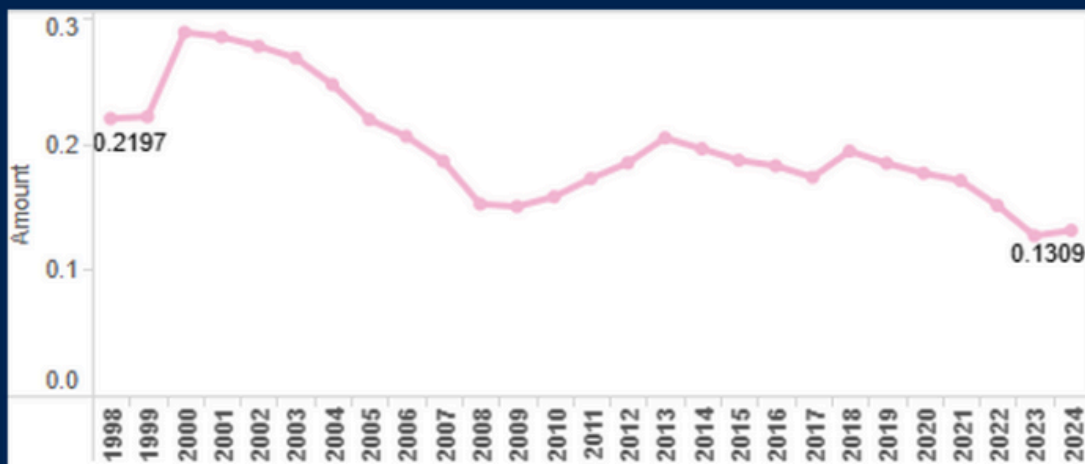
Through careful fiscal management, the Port has significantly lowered bond debt and reduced the tax levy rate while continuing to invest in capital projects that strengthen the regional economy. Today, Thurston County households contribute an average



of \$68 annually per property and remains one of the lowest levy rates in Washington state. Over time, the levy rate has steadily declined from 30 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value in 2000 to 12.53 cents in 2026.



Tax Levy Rate Over Time



Maximum levy rate for ports is \$.45 per \$1000 assessed property value; Port of Olympia's current levy rate is \$.1253

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Vision 2050 Goal: Build community partnerships and expand communication and public participation strategies.

The Communications and Engagement team played an active role in strengthening the Port's connection with the community by leveraging technology to improve online communication, growing our social media presence, increasing events and activities on the Port Peninsula and partnering with local organizations.



HIGHLIGHTS 2020-2025

- * Expanded community outreach by increasing the frequency of online communications, building our social media following, partnering with local organizations and stakeholders to offer more events and activities at the Port, showing direct and tangible benefits to taxpayers.
- * Organized town hall events as a way for commissioners and leadership to provide clear and unified messages to the community about Port investments and decisions.
- * Leveraged technology to improve public participation engagement, creating online surveys and polls and adding options for the community to attend virtual town halls and commission meetings.

- * Partnered with community organizations such as Lacey Makerspace and supported the cities of Tenino, Bucoda, Rainier and Yelm, through the Small Cities Program.

\$220K

Amount Awarded
through the Small
Cities Program
2020-2025

Types of Projects Funded

**Renovating
Historic
Buildings**

**Building
Bike
Pavillion**

**Purchasing
Equipment
for Events**

LOOKING AHEAD

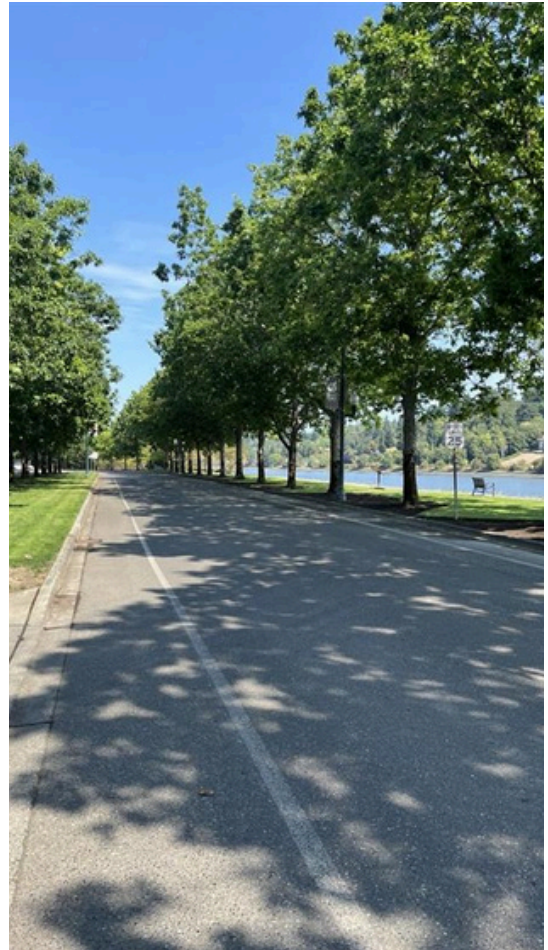


THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Vision 2050 is the Port's 30-year action plan. As we shape strategies for our programs, properties and assets, we will use the ideas shared by thousands of residents, customers and visitors during our first round of community engagement. Our focus is to continue to turn those ideas into real projects the Port can deliver. Over the next five years, we will continue to seek public input and track community priorities as we carry Vision 2050 into its next phase.

ANNUAL REPORTS

This report captures the first five years of Vision 2050. We achieved important progress and addressed significant challenges, but much work remains. Vision 2050 guides our next steps as we continue building the future of the Port Peninsula and the Olympia Regional Airport and Tumwater properties. Moving forward, we will publish reports annually to keep the community updated on our progress.



Follow Our Progress

As Vision 2050 projects and ideas advance, we will keep the community informed through online communications, annual reports, email updates and commission meetings. Currently in development is a dedicated Vision 2050 web page that will include dashboards, annual reports and the ability to track progress by topic or department. In the meantime, here are ways to engage and stay informed:



View Action Plan

[Download the Vision 2050 Action Plan](#)



Vision 2050 Web Page

Coming Soon!



Follow Us

Follow our day-to-day progress on social media. #Vision2050



Submit Input

Vision 2050 is a long-range action plan that will span the next several decades.

[Share your feedback](#)