

PORT *of*  
**KENNEWICK**  
**HIGHLIGHTS (2016 - 2025)**

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*An Update to the 100th Anniversary Report*



# CELEBRATING 110 YEARS

On March 6, 1915, a citizen vote established Port of Kennewick as the first port in eastern Washington and the fifth port district in Washington state.

In Washington, ports are economic development entities that build infrastructure and undertake projects that revitalize neighborhoods, create public spaces and spur private sector investment.

What started as a district encompassing 5 square miles, fostering waterfront commerce in downtown Kennewick soon

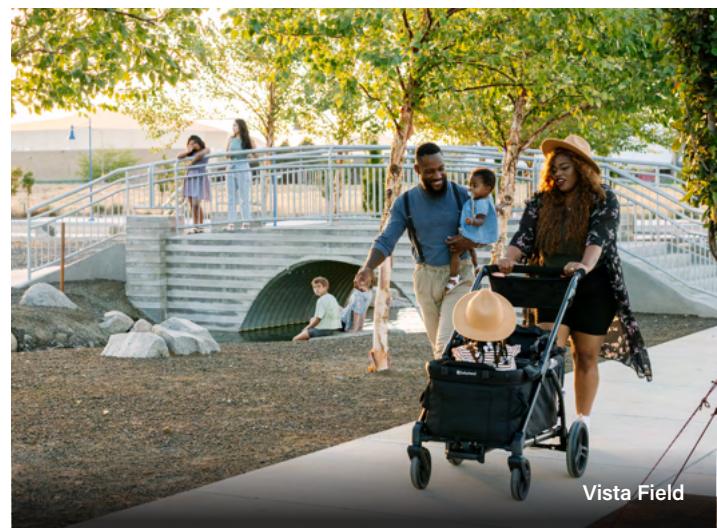
expanded to 485 square miles by citizen vote in 1954 to include Richland (south of the Yakima River), West Richland, a small portion of Benton City and the eastern third of Benton County.

As Port of Kennewick grew, it evolved to meet changing community demands through rail and air transportation, industrial sites and business parks.



Now, Port of Kennewick is focused on neighborhood revitalization and economic redevelopment to benefit the community and acknowledge Tribal homelands. Major Port projects are transforming Vista Field and renewing Kennewick's Historic Waterfront District along Columbia Drive at Clover Island, Columbia Gardens Artisan Village, The Willows and Cable Greens.

Read more about Port of Kennewick's history online at [PortofKennewick.org/History](http://PortofKennewick.org/History)



# CLOVER ISLAND REVITALIZATION

The Port has been investing in the redevelopment, restoration and revitalization of the publicly owned 16-acre Clover Island for over two decades. The work to restore and stabilize Clover Island, which turned an eroding, concrete-covered river shore into a destination waterfront with a living shoreline, involved many partners.

Shoreline improvements began in 2010 with the West Causeway, "Gateway Arch" structure, Riverwalk and Lighthouse Plaza projects. Through the years, projects continued with the Clover Island Boat Launch renovations and the installation of additional public art, including "Fair Game" in 2016, "Wiyákuktpa" (The Gathering Place) in 2017 and "Sapáxikas" (Willow Fish Traps) in 2018.

Crews completed the final phase in early 2023, adding 8,692 plantings, including 339 trees, to the north shoreline and extending the Clover Island Riverwalk. The Port held a community celebration on May 12, 2023, which included a Tribal blessing.

## Clover Island Project Partners

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office

Benton County

City of Kennewick

The ceremony was attended by members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Yakama Nation and the Nez Perce Tribes.

Transforming this formerly industrial waterfront into a tourism-driven destination is helping reconnect the community and Kennewick's "main street" business district with the Columbia River.



# COLUMBIA GARDENS ARTISAN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Tipping a tired Columbia Drive neighborhood into a destination waterfront has been a major Port endeavor.

Conceptual planning and the public input process started in 2011. Early work focused on cleaning up and enhancing the wildlife habitat and viewing opportunities along the interior waterfront. Subsequent efforts culminated in the creation of the Columbia Gardens Artisan Village.

Columbia Gardens is now home to tasting rooms, food truck businesses and the first wine production facilities in Kennewick.

Public art is on display throughout Columbia Gardens. The "Mid-Columbia Heritage Murals" installation celebrates the Latino community's substantial contributions to the fabric of the Tri-Cities, including the agricultural and wine industries.

Columbia Gardens is also attracting new residential and commercial enterprises, bringing jobs and the community back to enjoy this area of Kennewick's historic waterfront.



## Columbia Gardens Project Partners

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington Fish & Wildlife Service

Washington Department of Ecology

Benton County Rural County Capital Fund

City of Kennewick

Hanford Area Economic Investment Fund (HAEIF)

Ben Franklin Transit

Latino Heritage Mural Committee



# VISTA FIELD REDEVELOPMENT

After closing the little-used general aviation airfield in December 2013, the Port collaborated with the community and project partners to plan the transformation of Vista Field into a vibrant regional town center.

Infrastructure projects in the central 20 acres of Vista Field began in 2019. Those initial improvements encompassed utilities, several roads, sidewalks, a streamside promenade, a commercial plaza, public commons, pedestrian bridges, three fountains and some parking areas.

That work created the first 21 shovel-ready parcels. To date, the Port has sold eight lots to builders of new urbanism-style commercial or residential private development.



## Vista Field Project Partners

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Benton County Rural County Capital Fund

City of Kennewick

Hanford Area Economic Investment Fund (HAEIF)

Vista Vision Task Force

The Port is using proceeds from Vista Field land sales and grant funding from Benton County and HAEIF to complete additional infrastructure, opening up future phases.

The Port has also turned two former airplane hangars into pavilions and community gathering spaces at Vista Field's southern gateway.

Once the entire 103-acre Vista Field site is completed, economic projections indicate redevelopment could mean nearly 1,000 residential units, 740,000 square feet of commercial space, more than \$500 million in private-sector investment, \$51 million in new infrastructure, \$408 million in new (taxable) buildings and 3,380 jobs.



# PROPERTY TRANSITIONS



During the past decade, the Port sold several underutilized properties to help fund priority developments, drive economic growth or enhance community health and safety initiatives.

In 2016, the Port sold its final Spaulding Business Park parcel and its Quay Street property to private businesses to foster additional economic development in those areas.

In 2019, the Port auctioned its final land holdings in the Southridge area, utilizing the \$1.3 million in proceeds to support continued redevelopment of its Vista Field and Columbia Gardens properties.

## Business Development Buildings

For 40 years, the Port's business development buildings have provided scalable spaces to support start-ups and companies planning to expand. The Port has updated these buildings over the years and has also transitioned underutilized spaces for other beneficial uses.

The Port converted Building B at its Oak Street Industrial Park into its maintenance facility in 2025, providing the team with a central location for repair, storage and office space.

Additionally, at Vista Field, the Port refurbished Development Buildings A & B.



# SUPPORTING PARTNER PROJECTS



Port of Kennewick has helped its jurisdictional partners with significant investments for projects that make a difference for people living and working in the Port district. Examples of these collaborations between 2016 and 2025 are listed below.

- Expanding West Richland's urban growth boundary to include 93 acres of Port of Kennewick property, and then removing deed restrictions and selling that land to the city to enable construction of its police station
- Selling land to Benton County Fire District 4 for a new fire station, helping ensure the emergency response services necessary to support the growing West Richland community
- Providing funds to City of West Richland to support the development of the Van Giesen Gateway Park, restroom and riverfront viewpoint and trail
- Providing funds to City of Richland for improvements at Island View and extending Center Parkway North
- Helping fund City of Kennewick's Washington Street improvements
- Investing with City of Richland and Benton County to improve community parking at Badger Mountain Trailhead Park
- Granting funds to Benton City for shoreline development planning
- Granting land and extending utilities to support City of Kennewick's Fire Station 3 at Vista Field



# NA PAMÂW XÁTWAYN - WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS

Over the years, Port of Kennewick and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) have cultivated a meaningful relationship built on trust, mutual respect, common interests and regular engagement.

When reflecting on the partnership in 2025, Frederick A. Hill Sr., a former CTUIR Board of Trustees member, stated: "Na Pamâw Xátwayn," which translates to "we've become friends."

Port of Kennewick's district lies within the ceded, aboriginal and usual and accustomed lands of the Weyîletpuu (Cayuse people), Imatalamáma (Umatilla people) and Walúulapam (Walla Walla people) as recognized in the Treaty of 1855. This homeland is a sacred and significant place for the Tribes.

## The Beginning of a Lasting Friendship

In summer 2008, the Port began discussions with the CTUIR about Clover Island improvements at its Salmon Walk event in Pendleton. It was there that Port staff first met the late Chief Carl Sampson. Communications continued with social events on Clover Island, fostering connections between then CTUIR Executive Director Don Sampson and Port of Kennewick Executive Director Tim Arntzen.



"Wiyákuktpa" (The Gathering Place) artwork dedication



2024 Governor's Smart Partnerships Award for Clover Island

The early conversations between Tim and Don, along with their foresight and leadership, paved the way for deeper cooperation and engagement with subsequent CTUIR executive directors and staff, and led to a series of joint board meetings. Additionally, Commissioner Skip Novakovich, as the Port's designated Tribal representative, formed a deep bond with the late CTUIR Elder Les Minthorn and other CTUIR and Tamástslikt Cultural Institute board members.

These interactions provided the foundation of a growing friendship between the CTUIR and Port.



Vista Field phase one grand opening celebration

# NA PAMÂW XÁTWAYN - WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS

Throughout the years, the Tribes have provided invaluable contributions to Port projects, including cultural resources oversight, letters of support and advocacy for Clover Island's shoreline restoration.

## Historic Memorandum of Understanding

A pivotal moment in the relationship occurred on February 26, 2013, when the CTUIR Board of Trustees and the Port Board of Commissioners signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This historic memorandum solidified years of informal work together on shared interests.

Today, the MOU stands as an enduring commitment between the partners. However, what's proven to be even more important is the authentic, personal engagement, which can serve as a guide for future generations in the hope that they will continue to strengthen and build upon this treasured friendship.

## Revitalizing Clover Island

The Port and CTUIR worked together to restore and revitalize Clover Island, transforming its concrete rubble-covered riverbank into a living shoreline. Those efforts not only enhanced the shoreline's riparian ecosystem but also added a recreational path, amenities and art.

A notable collaboration is the "Wiyákuktpa" (The Gathering Place) art installation on Clover Island. The artwork and interpretive panels honor the CTUIR's tradition of harvesting tule reeds and capturing fish with woven willow baskets. In 2017, the partners celebrated completion of the installation with a community unveiling ceremony, commemorating the Tribes' ties to Ánwaš (Clover Island) and nči-Wána (Columbia River).



# NA PAMÂW XÁTWAYN - WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS

## Friend of the Port

To honor their significant contributions, the Port of Kennewick recognized the CTUIR as its 2017 Friend of the Port.

This recognition was a celebration of the CTUIR's unwavering friendship and partnership in transforming Kennewick's historic waterfront, as well as their investment of time, talents and ongoing involvement in Port projects. Port Commissioner Novakovich, who also serves on the Tamástslikt Cultural Institute board, expressed appreciation on behalf of the Port for the Tribes' continued dedication.



"We are grateful for the Tribes' support of the Port and our projects. All along the way, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have been our champions, our allies and our friends, from letters they've sent endorsing our grant requests, helping us restore the shoreline and engaging in regular meetings with our Commission to helping bring renewed vibrancy to the waterfront."

*Skip Novakovich  
Port of Kennewick Commissioner*

## A Lasting Bond

The relationship has continued to flourish, not only through collaboration among CTUIR and Port leadership and staff, but also through personal connections that have developed between them. Those connections have further solidified the friendship between the Port and Tribes.

As new Port and CTUIR staff and leadership are introduced, the partners desire that this strong relationship will continue, not as a transactional one, but with meaningful interactions and cooperation on projects of mutual benefit. And that the Port-CTUIR relationship might serve as a model to other municipalities as they seek authentic engagement with Tribes.



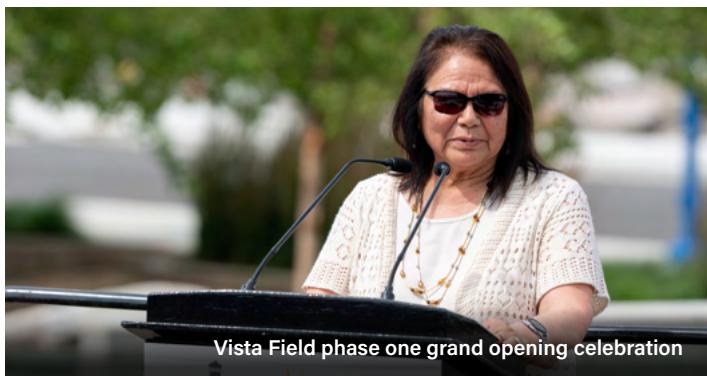
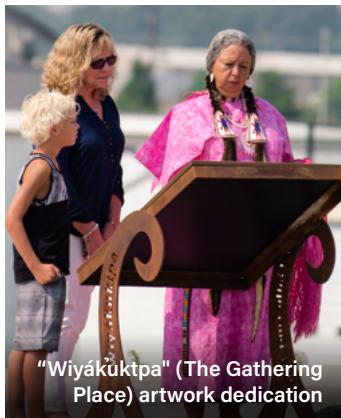
# NA PAMÂW XÁTWAYN - WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS



"The MOU was a major step and unique because our expectations are focused on friendship and understanding rather than transactions. These types of documents ensure we're aligned and provide 'marching orders,' even if they go unused for long periods."

**Dave Tovey**

*Former CTUIR Executive Director & Nixyáawii Community Financial Services Executive Director*



# NA PAMÂW XÁTWAYN - WE'VE BECOME FRIENDS

"The relationship and partnership between Port of Kennewick and the Confederated Tribes is a good example that all entities and Tribes can follow. Being able to communicate and work together, and having an understanding that isn't one-sided, is something others can see and understand."

**Toby Patrick**  
CTUIR Board of Trustees



# FRIENDS OF THE PORT

Port of Kennewick has been proud to recognize the following individuals, businesses and organizations for outstanding service to the Port and the community.

2025 Ricardo Garza & Daniel Tlatenchi

2024 Ron Swanby & Victor Palencia

2022 James Cox

2021 Don Britain

2020 Kennewick Police Department & Kay Metz

2019 ET Estate Sales

2018 Latino Heritage Mural Committee

2017 Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

2016 Cedars/Dave & Darci Mitcham



# PORT LEADERSHIP 2016-2025

The Port's leadership and staff take fiscal responsibility for taxpayer dollars seriously and work transparently to maintain the community's trust.

One of the most important demonstrations of solid management and fiscally sound leadership is the Port's decades-long history of clean audits with no findings. Following the 2024 Financial and Accountability audits, the Port received its 30th consecutive clean audit report from the Washington State Auditor's Office.

## Commissioners



**Ken Hohenberg**  
Representing District 1 Since 2022



**Thomas Moak**  
Representing District 2 Since 2014



**Skip Novakovich**  
Representing District 3 Since 2009

Commissioners serving since 2016 also included Don Barnes (2012 to 2021).

## Chief Executive Officer



**Tim Arntzen**  
2004 to current

"Port of Kennewick has a proven history of transformative projects within our region. Our careful planning, extensive due diligence and engagement with stakeholders and community members in our planning processes help us deliver sustainable developments."

*Tim Arntzen, Port CEO*

# LOOKING AHEAD

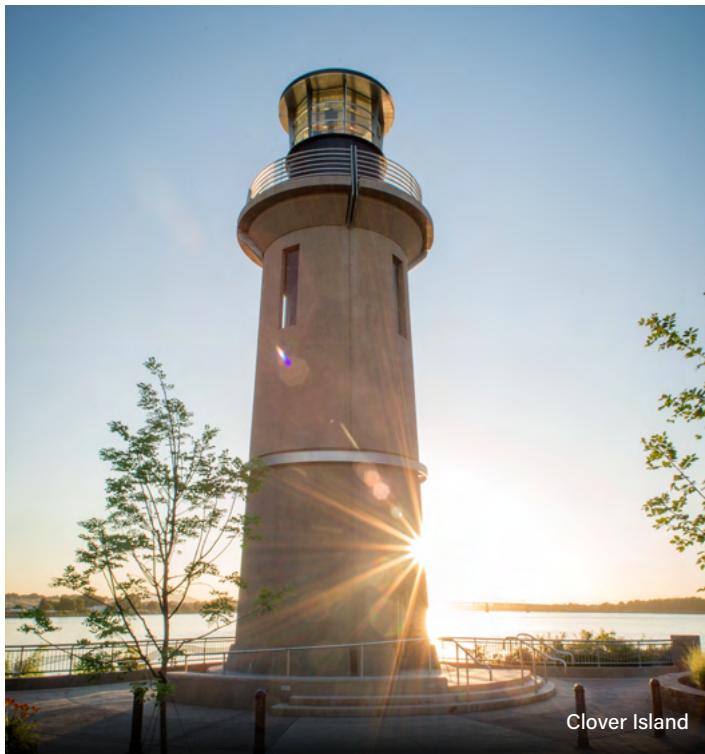


Port of Kennewick is dedicated to improving its district, reinvigorating tired neighborhoods and reconnecting the community with its waterfront. Central to these efforts is enhancing the quality of life in the region.

In the decade ahead, the redevelopment of Vista Field and Kennewick's Historic Waterfront will remain at the forefront of the Port's efforts, as it works alongside its valued partners on key projects.

Additionally, the team will continue to sell or lease properties and spaces and work cooperatively with its jurisdictional partners to foster private investment, business growth and job creation throughout the Port district.

Watch our momentum as we work for you at [PortofKennewick.org](http://PortofKennewick.org) and [VistaField.com](http://VistaField.com)





**PortofKennewick.org**