

VISION

P O R T O F K E N N E W I C K

Private-Sector Construction Begins at Vista Field

Kuki Izakaya Restaurant Groundbreaking

The first private-sector construction is underway at Lot 15 in Vista Field.

Port of Kennewick, Benton County and City of Kennewick hosted a community celebration on November 22 for the groundbreaking of Kuki Izakaya Japanese restaurant. Construction will continue through the new year, with an anticipated opening in late 2025.

The upscale restaurant will serve sushi rolls, sashimi, other Japanese cuisine, local wines and drinks, including sakis.

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Private-Sector Construction at Vista Field

Continued From Cover

In speaking at the event about her love of this community and special moments in life, Kuki Izakaya owner Isabelle Na shared, "Food is always with us, and I want to be a part of your life."

Benton County Rural County Capital Funds assisted the port in paying for improvements at Vista Field to prepare the phase one lots for private-sector development.

Port of Kennewick is following a community-driven master plan aligned with a 10-year development agreement with City of Kennewick to transform the 103-acre Vista Field site.

Message From the Commission President

The state legislature tasks ports as economic development entities. This year, the Port of Kennewick – established by citizen vote in 1915 – is celebrating our 110th anniversary with many economic development projects that benefit the region.

What started as a 5-square-mile port district fostering waterfront commerce soon evolved to include rail and air transportation, industrial sites and business parks across a 480-square-mile district.

As your port grew, it evolved to meet changing community demands. Our focus is now on neighborhood redevelopment.

We are working to revitalize Kennewick's Historic Waterfront District and transform Vista Field into a vibrant urban regional town center. In addition, we are undertaking various other diverse actions benefitting our taxpayers.

I am thrilled to share the stories and photos in this newsletter highlighting our recent activities. Please enjoy and know that at Port of Kennewick – we're working for you!



Skip Novakovich
President, Port of Kennewick
Board of Commissioners



Owner Isabelle Na and her family (center in the groundbreaking photo), along with officials from Port of Kennewick, Benton County, City of Kennewick and other entities, turn ceremonial shovelfuls of dirt at the groundbreaking. Commissioner Skip Novakovich (bottom left picture at podium) spoke to more than 75 attendees about the significant project milestone. Na (bottom right picture at podium) expressed how food brings culture to a community as port CEO Tim Arntzen looks on.

Port of Kennewick Public Commission Meetings

Meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 2 p.m. Visit PortofKennewick.org for meeting/location details, agendas and any schedule changes.

Cover Photo: Shovels staged for the November 22 groundbreaking of Kuki Izakaya restaurant at Vista Field.



Skip Novakovich
Commission President



Ken Hohenberg
Commission Vice President



Thomas Moak
Commission Secretary

More Development Coming to Vista Field

Eye Care Center & Retail Building Planned

Tri-Cities optometrists Dr. Brandon Furness and Dr. Royce Barney plan to construct a 7,000-square-foot building on Lot 31 at Vista Field for their Columbia Point Eye Care Clinic medical practice.

The two-story building will include dedicated medical offices and a retail optical shop with 1,500 square feet of retail tenant space.

Port of Kennewick Commissioners approved the purchase and sale agreement at the September 24 meeting.

With this latest sale, nearly 40% of the Vista Field phase one parcels are now sold or pending for residential, retail and commercial space.



The artist's renderings show the planned Columbia Point Eye Care Clinic at Vista Field.



Tri-Cities' Urban Town Center

VistaField.com

Learn more about Vista Field, the community's vision and parcels for sale.



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Port Secures Vista Field Grant Funding

Parking & Utility Improvements Planned

Port of Kennewick secured a \$1 million grant from the Benton County Rural County Capital Fund and another \$325,000 from the Hanford Area Economic Investment Fund to make additional parking and utility improvements at Vista Field. The grant funds are made available to projects that foster new businesses, expand employment and stimulate private-sector development.

The project along Azure Drive will activate a business and commercial corridor at the heart of Vista Field by installing water, sewer and electrical infrastructure to propel additional private-sector investment.

The project will also create 120 parking spaces with 20 Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations, and add streetlights, bollards, landscaping and infrastructure required to prepare and support the surrounding site – including the new Vista Field Pavilions – for expanded public use.

The parking and utility improvement projects are anticipated to begin in the spring and be completed by December 2025.



HANFORD AREA ECONOMIC INVESTMENT FUND

Vista Field Transformation

Pavilions Project Underway

The first construction phase of the Vista Field Southern Gateway Transformation project is well underway. The photos from late last year show progress on two former hangars that will become public-use pavilions.

Construction will continue once this phase is complete, with crews adding parking around the pavilions to support the use of those sheltered spaces and the adjacent mixed-use development sites.

Once complete, the project will include gathering spaces with a stage, a metal “paper airplane” sculpture and room to accommodate special events, community performances, public markets and pop-up retail activities.

Stay tuned for a ribbon cutting to be announced soon.



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Clover Island Revitalization Continues

Port Maintenance & Improvement Projects

This past year, the port made notable improvements to Clover Island, adding amenities and enhancing safety.

Thanks to a Local Parks Maintenance grant from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, the port was able to repaint the marina boardwalk, refresh “The Gathering Place” artwork and make restroom renovations.

In addition to the grant-funded projects, port crews installed doggie waste bag stations and repaired and reinstalled the “Fair Game” sculpture damaged by unusually high winds. The port also constructed a foundation for the Clover Island Concert Series stage and installed speed bumps on Clover Island Drive to foster a better recreational experience for Island visitors.



Port team members reinstalling the “Fair Game” metal sculpture on its basalt rock perch.

Port Announces Staffing Changes

Congratulations Jennifer, Welcome Philline

It is with deep gratitude that the port announces the retirement of Jennifer Roach. She has worked as the port’s accounting/administrative assistant for the past 15 years.

Jennifer helped ensure regulatory compliance and assisted with processing receivables, payables, leases and contracts during a period of significant growth and change. Jennifer’s diligence was instrumental in the port receiving its 29th consecutive clean audit.

The port hired Philline Go in October as senior accountant to fill this key position. Before joining the port, Philline served as a contractor for five months and worked closely with Jennifer, CFO Nick Kooiker, and other port staff to ensure a smooth transition of duties.



Jennifer Roach



Philline Go

Port Achieves 29 Years of Consecutive Clean Audits

According to the Washington State Auditor’s Office, the port’s most recent Accountability and Financial Statements Audit was clean, complete and accurate – with no findings. The audit covered detailed financial statements, statistical data, and policies and procedures related to the port’s 2023 operations.

“Reaching 29 years of clean audits is significant for our community and port team,” said Nick Kooiker, the port’s chief financial officer/deputy CEO. “We work hard every day to safeguard the public’s dollars and maintain their trust by operating transparently with tight internal controls.”

The audited financial report is available on the port’s website at portofkennewick.org/finance.

New Flagpole Unveiled

Vietnam War Memorial Refreshed

In late October, the community gathered to honor the dedication and sacrifice of local Vietnam veterans with a ceremony marking the unveiling of a new flagpole and refurbished Vietnam War Memorial Plaza.

This important memorial, originally installed in 1985, is within a city parklet at the southeast base of the Cable Bridge in Kennewick.

The new flagpole and refurbished monument were made possible by the dedication of local veterans and many other supporters, including local veteran Kevin Veleke, Port of Kennewick, Combat Veterans International Pasco Chapter, Greg Ford and the City of Kennewick.



New Artwork on Columbia Drive

Promoting Destination Waterfronts



A utility box at the corner of Washington Street and East Columbia Drive now features vintage travel-style artwork with Clover Island and Columbia Gardens images. The project was a collaboration between the port and City of Kennewick as the partners work to revitalize Kennewick's Historic Waterfront District.



PORT of KENNEWICK

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Developing assets to create sustainable family wage jobs, user-friendly transportation systems and quality of life enhancements for visitors and residents in the Port of Kennewick District.