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Community Report

A NEWS UPDATE FROM THE



Port of Vancouver USA

FALL 2025

Port Team Provides Steady Leadership During Uncertainty

Julianna Marler, CEO

In a year markets have fluctuated like the tides, I'm grateful for a talented port team working hard to grow the port's economic benefit to the community.

While economic uncertainty led to pauses across industries, the port team secured and broke ground on a state-of-the-art soda ash facility. Soda ash is in demand across the globe for construction, energy production and more.

Port terminal operations, security and longshore teams help ensure millions of tons of grain, steel and other cargo move efficiently and safely.

Our maintenance crew and project teams supported our industrial business tenants and delivered on several projects, maintaining crucial infrastructure and modernizing facilities.

Port finances are in great hands, too. Our dedicated accounting and contracts team helped secure our 16th straight clean audit and constantly steward port dollars to maximize opportunities for our region.

And port benefits continue in a variety of ways.

Our environmental team is helping us exceed emission reduction goals and spearheading projects to improve stormwater management.

Our external affairs department led 10 at-capacity port tours and a successful lecture series at the Kiggins Theatre, giving the public an inside look at the port's work.

Behind the scenes, our internal teams and administrative staff play an essential role in keeping daily operations running smoothly. Their attention to detail and commitment ensure that each department has the support needed to achieve our shared goals.

And we are grateful for our Board's support and leadership. In this newsletter, you will read about Commissioner Jack Burkman who completes his elected term this year. His decades of of impressive civic service include significant contributions to the port.

Ports are the economic engines of their communities, and must operate reliably no matter how rough the road ahead. Vancouver can be proud of the team dedicated to this port's success.



Progress Continues for New Soda Ash Terminal

Construction is well underway to remake the port's Terminal 2, Berth 7 into one of the world's most state-of-the-art export facilities for soda ash.

Soda ash is in-demand around the globe for glass manufacturing, healthcare applications, batteries for hybrid and electric vehicles and more. When complete, the port's upgraded terminal will enable efficient, environmentally-responsible exports of soda ash arriving via rail from Green River, Wyoming.

Accomplishing these goals will take continued focus. Work on this new facility began last spring. Crews are replacing aging dock structures, upgrading rail access and preparing for installation of new ship-loading and material-handling systems.

The facility will also feature enclosed conveyors and dust-

control measures designed to protect air and water quality while safely moving millions of tons of product each year.

The current construction activity and future movement of soda ash represents a boost for employment.

The project combines the expertise of several industry leaders: Vancouver Bulk Terminal, which is a joint venture between Nautilus International Holding Corporation and Neltume Ports; the port; and Solvay, a global leader in soda ash.

As one of the port's largest-ever facility improvements, the Vancouver Bulk Terminal project reflects an exciting opportunity for the Vancouver community. This infrastructure upgrade and new line of business will generate economic activity locally for decades to come.



The port website has a fresh look!

Scan the QR code to visit our newly renovated site: PortVanUSA.com

Q&A with Port Commissioner Jack Burkman



Commissioner Jack Burkman is retiring at the end of this year after decades of public service to the Vancouver community. We sat down with him to ask about his time with the port and what he’s looking forward to in his next chapter.

HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCE AND SKILL SET EQUIP YOU TO BE A PORT COMMISSIONER?

Working in private business, local government, and non-profits in Vancouver over the last 40 years taught me many things—the value of having a strategic plan and actually using it, the importance of helping people understand what is happening and why, being open to new ideas, knowing when to lead and when to follow, and being willing to make hard decisions.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THE PORT THAT MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY MAY NOT KNOW BUT SHOULD?

Our port is the second largest employee base in Clark County and has been an economic powerhouse for our community for over 100 years. Ninety percent of its business is exports, helping our country’s trade balance. It provides good-paying jobs for nearly 4,000 people who come to work every day at our port.

AFTER DECADES OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY, WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO CONCLUDE YOUR SERVICE IN 2025?

After working for almost 50 years, it’s time to step back, slow down, and spend more time with family and hobbies (I love bird photography!)

WHAT PART OF YOUR JOB WITH THE PORT WAS THE MOST FUN?

I loved participating in the port tours. So often the participants would say, “I had no idea the port did all this... and it’s so clean!” It was great to see and share their excitement as they learned about their port.

ANY OTHER THOUGHTS?

It’s been my great honor to work with my fellow commissioners and the port’s talented staff.

New Trail Expansion Underway

Good news for walkers, cyclists, and nature lovers: the port began construction on the next phase of its bike and pedestrian pathway along Lower River Road. This project adds about two-thirds of a mile of new trail between NW Gateway Avenue and NW Old Lower River Road, bringing the community closer to a continuous route from downtown Vancouver all the way to Vancouver Lake.

When finished in fall 2026, this new section will provide a safer, more scenic alternative to busy roads. It will feature lighting, guardrails, design accessible to diverse abilities and new landscaping with native plants that support pollinators and local wildlife.

Even more exciting, this project is part of a larger vision: eventually, the pathway will connect places like Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge, the Columbia River Renaissance Trail, and Frenchman’s Bar Regional Park. A more robust trail system means longer adventures, new commuting options and more opportunities to enjoy the outdoors close to home.

Thanks to years of planning, grant funding and strong community partnerships, this expansion is moving forward. Soon, this community will have another reason to lace up their shoes, hop on their bikes and discover more of Vancouver’s natural beauty.



Click here or Scan the QR code to see a video of how the new trail segment will look!

Planning for Tomorrow’s Workforce

In September, port commissioners, staff and education partners welcomed to the port a new Maritime Technology Program as part of Evergreen Public School’s Cascadia Technical Academy.



The Cascadia Tech Maritime Technology program located at the port is open to high school students throughout the county. Learn more [here](#).



The program is likely the first of its kind in Southwest Washington and is aimed at growing a future maritime workforce. With 75 port districts in Washington, the maritime industry is the state’s third largest economic driver—but is projecting a job shortage even as the maritime sector continues to grow.

“Our research is showing that the maritime workforce is aging,” said Mike Bomar, the port’s Chief Economic Strategy Officer. “Programs like this will ensure maritime employers have the next generation of talent, sustaining a robust regional economy.”

Students in the program will not just learn about ships, but also welding, mapping, navigation and safety practices.

Students earn college credit and industry certifications that ready them for careers in cargo handling, logistics, ship and boat building, vessel operations, marine research and more.

Currently 40 students are in the program—divided into morning and afternoon classes. The building it’s leasing from the port is outfitted with classroom space and located adjacent to the Columbia River and the port’s rail line.



Update on Public Market Project at Terminal 1

Those who enjoy rare sightings—comets, peeking at the northern lights, bigfoot—can still snag a once-in-a-century view at the Port of Vancouver USA’s Terminal 1.

The port finished removing its aged dock just west of the I-5 bridge in 2024, providing the first glimpse of that bare shoreline in more than a century.

That view will soon change again. Construction of the new Terminal 1 dock began in October 2025, which will support the future 40,000 square foot over-water public market.

Work throughout the last 18 months has made the shoreline sturdier and seismically resilient.

“We’re incredibly excited for the next phase in the reimagination of Terminal 1,” said Julianna Marler, port CEO. “When it’s finished, the public market will offer a really unique experience. Our goal is to provide the whole community accessible and affordable options

to shop, dine and enjoy this amazing spot over the Columbia.”

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM CONSTRUCTION

Progress will be seen and heard as construction equipment gathers at Terminal 1, and new pilings are placed during the relatively short October 1–January 31 in-water work window which is timed to minimize impacts to salmon.

To complete the necessary work during this narrow window, crews will begin piling installation activities at 7:00 am on weekdays and some Saturdays, wrapping up by 5:00 pm.

To protect pedestrian safety, some temporary access restrictions may be placed on the port’s Vancouver Landing area located river-side of the AC Marriott hotel.

The port plans to communicate schedules and any potential changes to neighboring businesses and partners.

“We appreciate the community’s patience as we move into the next redevelopment phase,” said Marler. “Working in and over the Columbia River demands lots of planning and care for safety and for our ecological resources, and those priorities will be front and center in the port’s dock construction activity.”

Caring for these ecological resources means removing nearly 1,000 aged wooden pilings and replacing them with 198 structural steel pilings for the new replacement dock, a major upgrade for aquatic life.

It also includes the use of “bubble curtains”—ingenious devices that push compressed air through submerged perforated pipes to create a bubble barrier around construction activity, reducing noise impact on aquatic life.

Other activity along the river will require careful planning as well. As the I-5 bridge replacement effort to the east of Terminal 1

Timeline for Terminal 1 work:

2025 – 2026
From October through January, steel-and-concrete pilings will be placed in the river to support a new dock. Once complete, dock panels will be installed.

2026 – 2027
Starting in October 2026, the finishing touches will be put on the dock and its protective fendering system, making it ready to support the market structure.

2027 – 2030 (ESTIMATED)
Construction of the public market

progresses, the port is actively coordinating with those officials to ensure the public market can also proceed.

“The new Terminal 1 dock and public market will be a community treasure,” said Marler, “We can’t wait to see people enjoy this space.”

Small Businesses, Festivals, Tourism Boosted by Community Fund

The port’s annual Community Fund distributed \$10,000 to local projects that support jobs, job training and development and tourism in 2025. Selections included the Vancouver Bee Project and a business incubator program at the Providence Academy. Representatives from both projects gave presentations about their projects at a September board of commissioners meeting. Other projects include the Ke Kukui Foundation’s 4 Days of Aloha festival and the Vancouver Arena GoFest Celebration.



More information about the port’s Community Fund can be found [here](#)



Summer Connections

Warm weather and blue skies bring opportunities to connect in person at a variety of community events.

For the first time, the port participated in a math and science night at Fruit Valley Community Learning Center. Students and families were able to test outside wind conditions and aerodynamics with port-provided balsa wood airplanes.

August means “National Night Out” in the Fircrest Neighborhood, and the port was positioned alongside its friends from the Columbia Play Project and many others. Between handing out bike lights, staff and port commissioners chatted with residents about port activities and used an aerial map to show the port’s footprint—including Terminal 1.

The city of Vancouver hosted Fruit Valley movie night in August. There was extra excitement this year; the event featured a ribbon cutting for Fruit Valley’s new Elizabeth Austin playground. The new inclusive playground replaced an aging structure and has been a huge hit with area families. The event also featured games, activities, music and free shave ice provided by the port.

Visitors to the Vancouver farmers market in September may have seen a port presence too. People were given the opportunity to enjoy a Terminal 1-themed cookie and learn more about the future public market.

More than 400 people participated in 10 public tours of the port over the summer, getting a firsthand glimpse of working terminals and the ships, trains and trucks that move cargo domestically and internationally. From steel coil to Subarus to wheat and grains, there is always a lot happening at the port.

Thank you to everyone who took time to say hello this summer!



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To speak to the commissioners by telephone, please call the port office at 360-693-3611 for contact information.

Written comments can be addressed to:

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In 2025, our expanded purple martin habitat produced 92 hatchlings

a strong reminder of the power of conservation and habitat stewardship.

Follow Us on Instagram!

Follow @portvanusa for stunning photos and fun facts about trains, grains, cranes and all the great work we do here at the Port of Vancouver USA.

BE SURE TO FOLLOW US ON ALL OUR SOCIAL CHANNELS:



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