Regional freight mobility matters

Growing up in Vancouver, I never would have pegged us as a hub in the broad sweep of international trade. But we are. In fact, Vancouver and its port are major players in this sector. In a state where 40% of jobs are tied to international trade, the Port of Vancouver USA moves more than 8 million metric tons of cargo annually, supports more than 20,000 jobs across the region and is one of the top ports in the state, alongside Seattle, Tacoma, Kalama and Longview.

All the cargo coming through our community and port has to move from where it’s made to where it’s being demanded. For example, Subaru of America imports over 90,000 Subaru vehicles each year to meet consumer demand. They’re shipped by vessel from Japan to our docks, where they’re accessorized by one of our tenants and then moved by truck or train to places like Portland, Boise and Chicago.

United Grain Corp. (UGC) exported 5.75 million tons of grain last year. Wheat, corn and soybeans are railed or barged to the port from the Northwest and Midwest. The grains are unloaded into UGC’s silos here at the port, then reloaded into bulk carriers that deliver to consumers in Asian countries.

Whether we’re talking cars or corn, it has to move. And it’s moving on a system that’s aging. In its latest infrastructure report card in 2017, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave our national infrastructure a “D+”, which indicates poor/at risk conditions. By and large, our national infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life and is at strong risk of failure.

Why does this matter to you and me? Because we’re all consumers, and because communities
Happy trails! New bike/ped path near completion

In just a few short months, trail enthusiasts in southwest Washington will be able to bike, run and walk along our newly constructed trail segment just west of the port's administrative offices on Northwest Lower River Road.

Construction began late last year, and crews have been working hard to complete grading, concrete placement and construction of a bridge boardwalk. The new segment of trail, which is partially funded by a federal grant, is part of a county-wide trail system that will eventually connect Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Washougal to Frenchman’s Bar Regional Park in Vancouver. Once completed in late spring or early summer, the new segment of trail will connect to an already-existing segment near Farwest Steel.

Stay up to date on the latest construction news by visiting portvanusa.com or following us on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn (@portvanusa).

Port’s free public lectures provide a look behind the scenes

The Port of Vancouver USA kicked off its annual Lecture Series in March with presentations about maintaining the Columbia-Snake River System, Washington state’s wheat and barley industry and an inside look at the state’s diverse public ports.

The March 6 lecture featured Kevin Brice, Deputy District Engineer for Project Management, Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Brice explained the work of the Corps, which is critical for the movement of more than 50 million tons of trade annually on the Columbia-Snake River System.

The April 9 lecture featured Joe Bippert, Program Director for the Washington Grain Commission. Bippert detailed how his agency is charged with strengthening and developing markets for Washington state wheat and barley.

Eric Johnson, Executive Director of the Washington Public Ports Association, headlined our third lecture on May 1, and shared information about the 75 busy and diverse ports in Washington state.

The port’s 2019 Lecture Series concludes with Port Report on May 30 at the Warehouse ’23 Event Space. This “State of the Port” presentation with Commission President Jerry Oliver and CEO Julianna Marler includes a review of 2018 activities, an update on current activities and projects, and a look ahead to the future of the port.

Port Report is free and open to the public; the presentation begins at 5:30 p.m. and staff will provide an optional tour of Terminal 1 at 6:30 p.m. Please call 360-693-3611 or email RSVP@portvanusa.com to reserve a seat.

Ecology grant funds two new spill-response trailers at the Port of Vancouver USA

Thanks to a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Port of Vancouver USA has added two new spill-response trailers to our fleet.

The grant gave the port the opportunity to purchase two trailers, all needed supplies and some additional customization that gives respondents quick, easy access to materials in the event of a spill. Supplies include spill pads, absorbent material, universal boom socks, a 20-gallon pop-up pool and a generator and trash pump—a large piece of equipment that can pump 500 gallons of water, hard and soft solids per minute.

The trailers are available to staff, tenants and Ecology personnel responding to spills in the area. They’re positioned at our main gate for easy access and quick response.
Golden waves of grain: United Grain Corp. celebrates 50 years

Grain—especially wheat—has always been an iconic Pacific Northwest product and a big part of life and economics in Washington state and the Port of Vancouver. The port's grain terminal was initially constructed in 1935 and is still the tallest structure in Clark County. It’s just one year younger than its neighbor, the Great Western Malting facility, where the company malts Northwest barley for brewing, distilling and food production.

In 1969 United Grain Corporation (UGC) took over operations of the port’s grain terminal, and this summer we’re proud to celebrate 50 years of teamwork, economic benefit and stewardship with one of our oldest partners.

“Congratulations to UGC on their golden anniversary,” said CEO Julianna Marler. “Their premier facility and dedication to customer service make them a critical shipping hub for farmers across the Northwest, Plains and Midwest, helping them efficiently get their grain from U.S. fields to consumers in Japan, China, Korea and South America.”

“We are proud to call Vancouver home for the last 50 years and look forward to continued success for UGC and our community,” said UGC President and CEO Augusto Bassanini.

Over the decades the company built additional capacity at the Vancouver Export Terminal (VET). It’s now the largest on the U.S. West Coast, moving nearly 6 million metric tons of grain products each year.

UGC has also diversified its operations to meet increased demand for grains in Asia, both for food production and animal feed. The company’s footprint has grown to include locations in Montana and North Dakota, and its portfolio now covers a variety of wheats, including hard red spring, hard red winter, soft white, western white, club, and durum wheat; as well as corn, soybeans, sorghum, canola, and barley.

More than 100 vessels call the VET each year. UGC’s operations support 100 family wage jobs across the company, including 50 employees at the VET who operate the terminal, inspect grain, load the ships and more.

“We are committed to do our part in this region’s trade-dependent economy and will continue to invest for long-term, sustainable growth,” said Bassanini.

A grain vessel approaches UGC’s Vancouver Export Terminal on the Columbia River

2018 By the Numbers

- 84% EXPORTS
- 16% IMPORTS
- 8.1 million METRIC TONS OF CARGO
- 26% DECREASE IN SOYBEAN EXPORTS
- 2.6 million METRIC TONS OF WHEAT EXPORTED
- 16.6% INCREASE IN STEEL IMPORTS
- 91,544 TOTAL SUBARUS IMPORTED
- 67,734 TOTAL RAIL CARS
THE PORT’S MISSION
The port’s mission is to provide economic benefit to our community through leadership, stewardship and partnership in marine, industrial and waterfront development.

TERMINAL 1
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This $4.7 million in funds from the 2019 capital budget supports:
• Design and renovation of Vancouver Landing (formerly the amphitheater), where the American Empress cruise ship docks
• Design and construction of the East Portal stormwater facility, which will treat all runoff from the development

These funds also support $50 million in private investment by Vesta Hospitality, a Vancouver-based hotelier building a new AC by Marriott Hotel at Terminal 1, and future private investment in the development’s north blocks—the site of future mixed-use development to include retail, residential, office space and parking.

LOOKING AHEAD
Upcoming work will include:
• Selecting a mixed-use developer for the north blocks
• Updating signage around the development
• Improving existing parking areas and implementing paid parking

TROBELLA
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Trobella currently employs 31 full-time workers and expects to hire up to six more full-time positions with this expansion.

The Tronts have steadily expanded their business to serve our region’s population growth and resulting construction projects. Trobella’s sales have grown an average of 30% each year for the past five years; this most recent expansion helps provide the elbow room needed for continued efficient operations and future growth. Some of the extra space will also be used to expand the company’s material storage, reducing the number of deliveries and truck traffic to the facility.

CEO COLUMN
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like ours and others up and down the supply chain need river, road and rail infrastructure to move our economy forward. In March the American Association of Port Authorities released an economic analysis showing that cargo movement through U.S. seaports supports nearly 31 million jobs and brings $5.4 trillion in economic value to the nation—26% of our nation’s $20.5 trillion economy in 2018.

The port and its tenants support more than 3,200 direct, family-wage jobs and bring $2.9 billion in regional annual economic benefit.

To continue generating these economic advantages, we must keep our roads, docks, rail lines, airports, water systems, electric grid and other systems in shape.

Much like infrastructure itself, the initiatives to maintain these foundational systems often progress in the background. But they are important to the future of our region and its citizens, and we must bring them to the foreground to continue being competitive on a global scale and keep our nation and economy strong.

Don’t Drip and Drive!
Get your car checked for leaks today

When it rains, storm runoff carries oil and other toxic leaks from vehicles down storm drains to rivers, streams and lakes. And small leaks matter. An estimated 600,000 quarts of oil leak from vehicles in Clark County each year, polluting our waterways.

The Port of Vancouver is proud to partner with Clark County, Vancouver Watershed Alliance and other stormwater partners to bring the Don’t Drip and Drive campaign to Clark County—and to keep our stormwater runoff clean all year round. You can visit a participating auto repair shop today and mention Don’t Drip and Drive to get a free visual leak inspection and discount on car leak repairs!

For more information on how you can fix your leaks and protect our watersheds, visit stormwaterpartners.com.