



Sims Way Gateway and Boat Yard Expansion Project
March 6, 2022

Though final decisions on possible tree removal or construction have not been made, the City, Port, and PUD have made progress on forming a stakeholder group and seeking professional input on planning for the Sims Way Gateway and Boat Yard Expansion Project.

The City of Port Townsend has formally approved a stakeholder process in which local residents with expertise and interest will review various aspects of the project. The residents have experience in various areas, including engineering, landscaping, multimodal mobility and marine trades. Members of this group include Jennifer Rotermund of the city's Parks, Recreation, Tree, and Trail Advisory Board; Ron Sikes of the Admiralty Audubon Society; Arlene Alen of the Chamber of Jefferson County; and local residents Forest Shomer, Kate Dwyer, Dan Burden, Russell Hill, Joni Blanchard, and Steve Mader.

"We have a great group for this committee and are very grateful their interest and willingness to volunteer their time on behalf of the community," said City Public Works Director Steve King. "Staff is excited to start the process and is hoping the public will be engaged in supporting the process and the committee by providing constructive comments and feedback on the work ahead."

The Port of Port Townsend has engaged a professional arborist to study the Lombardy poplars lining Sims Way.

Katy Bigelow, an ISA Certified Consulting Arborist, previously worked for the Port to assess the health of a few of the poplars near Port Townsend Brewing. She will assess the poplars on the south side of Sims Way and is expected to have a report done in March.

Also, Port Capital Projects Director Matt Klontz, in coordination with City Public Works Director King, has started a selection process for an engineering firm which also has public engagement process and arborist expertise. The stakeholder group will work with the consultant to work through technical analysis of the project.

"With the stakeholder process started and the selection of a consultant started, the public engagement continues," said Port Executive Director Eron Berg. "The project partners are looking forward to working with the community, stakeholders and interested parties as the project moves into the design phase to achieve primary objectives of safe and reliable power, expanded boat yard to serve the marine trades, and implementation of the Gateway Plan."

The Jefferson County Public Utility District has stated its desire to work with the project partners and the community to find the best solution to problems presented by the Lombardy poplars. PUD commissioners and staff have discussed the issues in multiple public meetings and are open to a variety of mitigation options.

"The PUD has spent a lot of time the last month looking at alternatives," said PUD General Manager Kevin Streett, "different ways we can build, different ways other entities have built near trees, and we've thrown out quite a few options to the City and Port. We do think the project

approved by the PIF grant is a good project, and that we can work together to find a way to come up with a solution that works for the community.”

PUD District 1 Commissioner Jeff Randall concurred with Streett and added that he would like to see more development by both the City and the Port before the PUD settles on a final plan for mitigating the contact between power lines and trees. “Our plan is pretty simple, underground the power lines, their plans are a little more complicated.”

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For more information^[1]_{SEP}

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