

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACTS:
John Mauro, City Manager
360.379.5043 jmauro@cityofpt.us

Eron Berg, Executive Director, Port of Port Townsend
360.316.6013 eron@portofpt.com

Kevin Streett, General Manager, Jefferson County PUD #1
360.302.1700 kstreett@jeffpud.org

**VIRTUAL TOWN HALL ON NOVEMBER 9 AT 5PM TO DISCUSS SIMS WAY GATEWAY PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION & BOAT YARD EXPANSION PROJECT**

The City, Port and Jefferson County PUD will provide brief presentations and then open up to questions and discussion to ensure community ideas and perspectives are incorporated

PORT TOWNSEND – The City of Port Townsend, the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson County PUD #1 are co-hosting a virtual Town Hall meeting to discuss the Sims Gateway Tree Project. Representatives from each agency will give a brief overview of each element of the project and then be on hand to answer questions and hear community perspectives.

The goal of the Town Hall meeting is to ensure a more comprehensive and common understanding of the elements of the project, overall scope, rationale and objectives, costs, status, and timeline as well as to incorporate ideas and feedback from the wider community into project planning.

The project is a joint project with Jefferson County PUD, the Port of Port Townsend, and the City of Port Townsend. The project is being led by the Port of Port Townsend and Jefferson County PUD, with the City participating as a supporting partner for economic development, safety, the replacement of the trees and to address the needs of the Kah Tai Lagoon side of Sims Way.

The project is intended to leverage economic health of Boat Haven and the maritime industry, safety and reliability associated with power infrastructure, and environmental stewardship to better the community for the long term consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Gateway Development Plan.

“This is a great opportunity to leverage our collective strengths as agencies in partnership to make a generational improvement with lasting benefits. In particular, expansion of the boatyard will be very helpful for our maritime industry by providing more space for boat projects,” says Port of Port Townsend Executive Director, Eron Berg, “It is also vitally important to the Port that the



safety concerns about the close proximity of the boat yard and the 115kv power lines is addressed”

“Right now we have two issues,” said Jefferson County PUD General Manager Kevin Streett. “We have boats and masts making contact with powerlines, and we have a whole row of trees that have grown right up into the powerlines.” To solve the problem, Streett and the PUD intend to remove the trees and bury the power lines. “Removing the trees takes away our concerns about fire and outages. Undergrounding the power ensures no more boats come in contact with high voltage lines and gives the Port room to expand the boat yard. It’s a win-win as far as the PUD is concerned.”

The City recognizes that this tree lined section of Sims Way is an iconic feature to Port Townsend along with Boat Haven and Kah Tai Lagoon. “Our amazing natural assets are deeply important to so many people in our community,” says City Manager John Mauro. “The poplar trees, especially now, are simply beautiful. That said, we’re also thinking ahead so that a future tree-lined entrance to Port Townsend isn’t a liability for electricity supply and safety or a hindrance for our maritime industry, but something that remains stunning, accessible and iconic – a project that our community can be proud of for 100 years onward.”

The three agencies, with the Port as lead, applied for a Jefferson County Public Infrastructure Grant of \$1m to offset half of the overall project of \$2m, which includes tree removal, undergrounding power lines, installing a multi-use path, replanting trees, expanding the boatyard at Boat Haven and associated permitting.

For more information, please visit the City’s webpage at:

<https://cityofpt.us/engagept/page/sims-gateway-and-boat-yard-expansion-project-virtual-town-hall-november-9-500pm>

A general presentation is also available here: <https://cityofpt.us/publicworks/project/sims-gateway-and-boat-yard-expansion-project>

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