

Questions and Answers on the Ridgefield Waterfront RFQ

The following questions were received from members of potential development teams during February and March 2024. Answers have been provided by the Port of Ridgefield. This Q&A document will be posted on www.ridgefieldwaterfront.com, and emailed to parties who have provided their email addresses to the Port.



What is the location, depth, and capacity of the new storm outfall(s)?

That information about the stormwater system is shown in the record drawings on pages 412-417 of this document:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/eue18h21iqt9bfig0i3i7/Rf-LRIS-Cells-IA-Completion-Rpt.pdf?rlkey=3ja13ejsu9y7qd7tsa5r5ab4f&dl=0>

Did FEMA maps get updated after current fill/grading was completed?

No. Final elevations for the permitted floodplain fill are shown in the record drawings on pages 407-411 of the same document linked above. On those drawings, the 24-foot contour line is the 100-year floodplain level. Dashed contours represent elevations prior to grading, solid lines show final graded elevations after fill.

Does the port have a preferred water access plan including truck/trailer parking at full development?

The Port anticipates that the Community Boat Launch (See area 3 on Waterfront Land Use Map, RFQ page 14) will remain in its current design and layout throughout the development of the waterfront. This boat launch currently provides parking for cars, truck, and trailers, as well as motorized and human-powered boat launches.

In addition, the Port wishes to build a multiuse parking lot that can accommodate vehicles with boat trailers, in approximately the location and size shown as Area 4 (Public Parking A) in the RFQ. This parking lot would need to be designed in such a manner that it works for all types of users,

including visitors to Waterfront Park and boaters, arriving in single automobiles as well as vehicles with boat trailers. The final design is TBD.

Does the SS Lift Station to the south have capacity for redevelopment?

Yes, the sanitary sewer pump station will eventually take all the wastewater currently going to the existing wastewater treatment plant, as well as wastewater from the waterfront development, and send it to the Salmon Creek Treatment Plant. Clark Regional Wastewater District has additional information here: <https://www.crwwd.com/projects/capital/>

Is the Waterfront Park, now in the concept design process, funded?

No. The Port and City will be looking at a range of potential funding sources to build the park, including funds from the Port; City, including parks impact fees; tax increment financing; RCO and other grants; and developer contributions. We plan to assemble funding sources over time.

Since the park space functions at a baseline level today—the community uses the trail and open space to walk, hold events, launch kayaks, etc.—it may be that the buildout of the park takes place in phases over time as funding sources are received.

Does the Port prefer a master developer or site developers?

The Port's preference is to identify one master development team through this RFQ/RFP process. The Port believes that its vision will be better served by having a single master development team with whom it can establish a master development agreement, and partner on entitlements, infrastructure buildout, master planning, etc. We anticipate that this master development team will be able to pull in additional site developers with specific expertise to help build out certain properties.

That said, it is possible that the Port will directly engage two or more site developers—if each of those site developers was uniquely capable of building a piece of the Port's vision.

How will the railroad participate in development of the Waterfront, if at all?

BNSF owns the rail line that runs along the eastern edge of the Waterfront properties. Both freight and Amtrak commuter trains operate on this line.

Trains no longer sound their horns in the area, since the port constructed the rail overpass and the city closed the two former at-grade public street crossings. This is very positive as the trains that pass through are much quieter than before. The Division Street crossing is now a private crossing

with “crash gates” installed, meant only for emergency access to the Waterfront by the police and fire departments.

While the railroad will be involved at some level since they are an adjacent property owner, we don’t foresee approvals being needed from them or intensive involvement by them. They do have a narrow maintenance and construction easement adjacent to the tracks.

What is the benefit of the Comprehensive Operations and Maintenance Plan (“The COMP,” 2023), the Environmental Covenant, and other environmental work that has been completed at the site over the years?

There are many benefits. First, a lot of site work, earth removal, borings, monitoring wells, etc. have been completed over the years. The site now has a 41-acre clean cap on top of it. It means that developers and the Port should have a clear understanding of the primary locations where contaminants remain beneath the soil cap. It also means that, as long as developers follow the rules set forth in the Comp and Environmental Covenant, their liability and risk should be much lower than if these rules and agreements were not in place. We expect that hard construction costs, contingencies, and insurance premiums should be significantly lower.

What is entailed if developers have to construct foundations and infrastructure below the soil cap? If developers build beneath the soil cap, will they be responsible for managing and/or disposing of contaminated media, and/or assume liability for environmental issues during construction and over the long term? What process will developers have to go through with the Department of Ecology or others?

First, it is worth noting that the Department of Ecology (“Ecology”) has determined that, “cleanup at the former PWT plant site [Waterfront Site] was completed.”

The Port expectation is that it is likely that, if developers build (e.g., foundations or utilities) beneath the soil cap, they will be responsible for managing and/or disposing of contaminated media.

Developers will also assume some liability for environmental issues during construction and over the long term, however, as mentioned above, these should be significantly reduced by the Comp, Environmental Covenant, and other environmental work completed. The Port and its environmental consultants, MFA, have a long and productive working relationship with Ecology.

Waterfronts with somewhat comparable environmental issues have been developed at the Ports of Vancouver, Everett, and Camas-Washougal (underway), among others.

We are concerned that the Port sees housing and some other uses as “acceptable” but not “desirable.” These uses are integral to our vision. Does the Port support these uses?

The Port supports your use of residential as part of your mixed-use development. We understand that housing is an important component of the development mix on waterfronts; most or all of the large-scale waterfront redevelopment projects have involved housing. We also understand that because of the strength of the housing market, having some housing on the Waterfront puts us in a better position to pull in other land uses such as food and beverage, employment, and lodging.

That said, the Port is an economic development agency, so if housing is built it must be within the context of a project that delivers on our triple bottom line goals of economic, community, and environmental benefits.

Regarding the existing zoning, we believe it will be absolutely necessary to modify the 18 units per acre maximum, the ground floor housing prohibition, and potentially other aspects of the existing zoning. Is it possible to modify these aspects of the zoning?

The Port is aware of some issues in the existing zoning and will work with the selected development team, City of Ridgefield, and other parties to advocate for any necessary revisions to city zoning code that implement the goals of the Waterfront.

Who will review developer SOQs and select a short list of development teams?

The Port’s core review team will be Randy Mueller, Port of Ridgefield CEO, and Ethan Perry, Port of Ridgefield Director of Operations. Brian Vanneman of Forum Placemaking will be an advisor to the process. The Port may solicit non-voting advisory input from the City of Ridgefield.

Will the Port pay the developers for their time and the time of their key subconsultants needed to conduct site planning, engineering, due diligence, and/or other work?

No. The Port has attempted to limit the amount of effort that development teams will need to expend in order to respond to this RFQ phase.

While the development team that is ultimately selected will need to invest time and effort during the predevelopment phase, the Port's expectation is that these investments will be offset by the Port's proposed deal structure. (See the RFQ, including sections: Development Incentives and Deal Structure, How the Port Can Help, etc.) For example, the Port is a patient landowner and can lease land to the selected development team in a series of phases.