

The Hilton Vancouver Washington opens tomorrow amid speeches, etc.

The Hilton Vancouver Washington—that's what the managing Hilton Hotels Corp. calls Vancouver's newest hotel—opens tomorrow amid speeches, ribbon cutting, and the restaurant and bar opening.

The 226-room hotel and 30,000 square-foot convention center is the product of the Identity Clark County and the City of Vancouver, the culmination of more than ten years of civic effort. The hotel-convention center and renovation of Esther Short Park have sparked over \$200 million in development in an area of downtown Vancouver almost written off in the late 1980s.

Speeches begin at 10:30 a.m. by mayor **Royce Pollard**. At 11:30 a ceremonial ribbon will be severed and the first hotel guest is scheduled to check in.

Open house tours will be conducted for the public between noon and 3 p.m.

The restaurant, Gray's at the Park, will be open for lunch and dinner.

Port of Vancouver taking another industrial expansion step

Every day, on average, 118 railroad cars enter the Port of Vancouver industrial area and 118 depart. About two-thirds of the cargo entering the port by rail is grain of some type, making the Port of Vancouver a major west coast grain shipping center.

Community leaders this morning were briefed on the port's most immediate expansion plans, as well as plans for environmental mitigation that will preserve several hundreds of acres north and east of the Port. A second public briefing will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, June 16, in the port commissioners hearing room, 3103 NW Lower River Road.

"Never in its 93-year history has the Port of Vancouver been better positioned to deliver on its state mission, 'to provide economic benefit to our community,' by creating new jobs for Southwest Washington," port executive director **Larry Paulson** said.

According to Paulson, waterborne cargo will grow by two-thirds over the next 20 years and cargo container shipping will triple in 20 years. One of the biggest problems facing the port is rail congestion, port officials say. Inbound and outbound trains clock the mail lines of the Union Pacific and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroads nearly an hour and a half a day.

On the industrial development side, however, the port is poised to move. Now is the time to develop more than 600 acres of industrial land, Paulson says. The port has the potential to double current port operations. The Columbia Gateway property has 534 acres available for development, and the Rufener farm, bought last year, will add another 265 acres of industrial potential. Currently Clark County has as few as 200 acres of heavy industrial zoned land available. The port developments will increase the amount of industrial land available.

Part of the port's industrial planning includes environmental mitigation of the northern 572 acres of the Columbia Gateway project.

Total cost of the port's expansion project is \$230 million. It would be financed through a combination of operating revenues, borrowed funds, interest income, grants, and a six-year industrial development district levy, which in itself would bring in \$60 million. Port commissioners recently approved the levy but set it back one year pending completion of expansion plans.

The Port of Vancouver was established in 1912 by a public vote. It is just over 100 miles upstream from the Pacific Ocean and has over 3 1/2 miles of waterfront.

People

Matt Erickson, formerly of Vancouver, and publisher of an on-line historic look at the United States Constitution, *Foundation For Liberty*, has filed suit against the Bavarian-themed City of Leavenworth for not allowing him to erect an 80-foot flag pole from which to fly a 30- by-10-foot American flag at an office and apartment building he is building there. Erickson suggests that the fact that the city has endorsed the erection of a 95-foot Bavarian maypole on public property in the center of town, but purposely is preventing him from erecting an 80' pole to fly the American flag, provides convincing evidence that the new city ordinances have less to do with limiting the heights of poles and more to do with limiting what may fly from them.

Calendar

The C-TRAN board, considering offering voters another chance to support the transit system by additional sales tax, meets in a work session at 4:30 p.m. today and, following that meeting, convenes a regular session at 5:15 p.m. Both meetings are across the street from C-TRAN headquarters in the ESD 112 facilities, 2500 NE 65th Avenue. ☞ The Clark County Chamber of Commerce Legislative Review Forum is at 6:30 p.m. this evening in the Water Resources Education Center. The public is invited, and there is no charge. ☞ Clark County commissioners meet in informal session at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 15.

Tuesday headlines from at home and around the world:

[City officials considering \\$11 million a year in new tax revenue--Columbian, **Jeffrey Mize**](#)

[City council considers three tax options--Oregonian, **Allan Brettman**](#)

[Copper River Salmon, good as it is, may get by more on branding than reality--Columbian, **Ken Olsen and Erik Robinson**](#)

[Oregon to tackle Delta Park traffic--in 2008--Columbian, **Erin Middlewood**](#)

[Local school students better than average--Columbian, **Margaret Ellis**](#)

[Jim Malinowski's Clark College classes preparing future linemen and industrial electricians--Columbian, **Mary Sisson**](#)

Tuesday on the air

National Recognition for Chinook Trail—3:30 p.m. CVTV

Local Republican Nominating Convention (6/11)—4:30 p.m.

Vancouver Planning Commission (live)—7 p.m. CVTV

Philadelphia at Seattle Mariners (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFX

NBA Finals, Game 3, San Antonio at Detroit (live)—6 p.m. KATU

Town Tabloids and the weather

Levi Barnes already scoping out subatomic particles, in Hillsboro, takes time out to pick up doctorate in physics. ☞ **Carol Curtis** celebrating Flag Day, with birthday cake. ☞ **Phillip Parker** being reasonable about optimism. ☞ **Addison Jacobs** maintaining a sense of control. ☞ **Ray Johnson** packing good news. ☞ **Tuesday**, wet in the morning, afternoon sun, possible evening showers, 66. **Wednesday**, buttermilk sky, 70. **Thursday**, mostly gray and damp, 68.