

National Indian Gaming Commission approves Cowlitz Tribe gaming ordinance

Although the action does not authorize the Cowlitz Indian Tribe to conduct gambling on its 123-acre site near La Center, the National Indian Gaming Commission today announced that it has approved gaming ordinance for the tribe's proposed casino and resort.

Commission chairman **Phil Hogen** said: "After careful consideration, the commission has approved the Cowlitz gaming ordinance. However, this approval does not authorize the tribe to conduct gaming.

Hogen added that in order for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe to conduct gaming on this site, the Department of Interior must first accept the land into trust, and the tribe must also exercise authority over these lands.

Hogen further stated that NIGC approval is not determinative of the DOI decision on the fee-to-trust process. The department has an independent course of action, he said.

During consideration of the tribe's proposal many issues were considered, including the restored federal recognition of the Cowlitz Tribe, the tribe's historical and modern connections to the area, and the fact that the tribe currently has no reservation or other trust land.

After learning of the decision, U.S. Rep. **Brian Baird** (D-3rd) stated: "I reiterate my intent to ensure that the Cowlitz Tribe's gaming application process is open, transparent, and understandable for Southwest Washington residents.

"I remain hopeful that the Department of Interior will answer my call to hold a public meeting and appoint an ombudsman to help clear up public confusion over the application process. I continue to urge the Department of Interior to refrain from making any recommendations until after the public meeting has been held and public confusion has been cleared up."

C-TRAN studies new efficiencies in service

C-TRAN is considering changes in service and routes that will improve service to riders and bring about greater efficiencies, which likely will include replacing the downtown Vancouver and Westfield Vancouver Mall transit centers with a major transit center on NE 65th Avenue where the transit agency has its headquarters.

The lease with the City of Vancouver for the 7th Street transit center has expired, but the city council is expected to grant the agency one more year of operation.

Service to downtown and the mall would not be eliminated, however C-TRAN spokesman **Scott Patterson** says that the realignments that are being considered would create, instead of transit centers, super stops at both locations.

The Fisher's Landing would remain a transit center and the NE 134th Street, Salmon Creek Park and Ride also would remain. According to Patterson, the realignment of the NE 134th Street interchange at I-5 and I-205 would open that park and ride to continued operation. A park and ride stop likely would be created at NE 99th Street to augment the Salmon Creek facility.

According to Patterson, the process toward greater efficiency and improved ridership likely will take two years.

Commissioners set meeting to zero in on urban growth land uses

With a revised draft discussion map of areas that could receive in-depth study for urban uses under the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan in hand, Clark County commissioners have set a work session for further review at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29, in the Public Service Center.

If the commissioners approve it, the map it would become the basis for the board and planning commission to formally consider changes to urban growth boundaries in order to provide sites for homes and businesses over the next 20 years.

The county's web site at www.clark.wa.gov/longrangeplan/review/index.html provides more information about the review process, including background, announcements and related maps.

Written comments on the grown plan may be sent to the Board of Clark County Commissioners, P.O. Box 5000, Vancouver, WA 98666-5000, or emailed to boardcom@clark.wa.gov.

News brief

The Lieser Road overpass at Highway 14 will remain closed until Monday, Nov. 28, according to the state

Department of Transportation. The closure does not have any impact on Highway 14, and both on and off ramps are in operation. The overpass was damaged Monday when a fork lift truck on an eastbound flatbed truck hit the structure causing considerable damage to part of the overpass.

Calendar

Port of Ridgefield commissioners meet in regular session at 6 p.m. today in port offices at 111 W Division Street. ⚡ Although most businesses and all governmental offices are open on Friday, Nov. 25, the *Daily Insider* will not be published. ⚡ The Vancouver Rotary Club's Festival of Trees, sponsored by Key Bank, opens a three-day run at 9 a.m. Friday, Nov. 25, in the Hilton Vancouver Washington. More than 50 Christmas trees are on display until 9 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 27. Adult admission is \$5. ⚡ The Vancouver Christmas Tree lighting ceremony is at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 25, in Esther Short Park. A free concert by the Vancouver Pops Orchestra follows in the Hilton Vancouver Washington at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday headlines at home and from around the world

[Methadone clinic gets approval--Columbian, Tom Vogt](#)

[Storedahl handed another setback--Columbian, Erin Middlewood](#)

[Xbox 360 buyers turning a profit--Columbian, Amy McFall Prince](#)

[History has become a Clark County growth industry--Columbian, Tom Koeninger](#)

[Mortgage rates see tiny drop as loan applications fall--USA TODAY, Reuters, Julie Haviv](#)

[District judge tosses NEA lawsuit to block the No Child Left Behind Law--New York Times, AP](#)

[Three brigades in Iraq may be cut early in 2006--Washington Post, Bradley Graham and Robin Wright](#)

Wednesday on the air

SWIFT Grant Recipient Ceremony (11/17)—4:30 p.m. CVTV

Portland Trail Blazers at Miami (live)—4:30 p.m. FSN, KXL, KXMG

Clark County Youth Town Hall—6 p.m. CVTV

Portland Winter Hawks at Spokane (live)—7 p.m. MCMD

Public Health Financing Hearing—8:30 p.m. CVTV

City Minutes (11/13)—11:30 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the weather

Meghan Shaughnessy puts meaning in Thanksgiving. ⚡ **Alex Meinig** tidying up. ⚡ **Mike MacKenzie** inventing and engineering. ⚡ **Corey MacKenzie** planning adventure. ⚡ **Julie Kummer** making a deal on prime real estate. ⚡ **Ed Vidinghoff** getting 11 minutes of fame. ⚡ **Wednesday**, partly cloudy, 55. **Thursday**, kind of gray, with possible late showers, 54. **Friday**, expect a little rain, 50.