



## **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

### **For a combined City/Port District Public Park Facility**

The Port of Poulsbo is very excited about the prospect of a cooperative effort to replace the public restroom facility in Muriel Iverson Williams Waterfront Park. To demonstrate its commitment to the project, the Board of Commissioners has authorized the expenditure of \$300,000, at a minimum, and any staff assistance that is applicable.

As it has been explained to us, the restroom facility is being replaced due to obsolescence and to promote economic vitality in the downtown area of the city and port district. This is a natural fit for the Port District, which has a guest moorage facility that is responsible for nearly three million dollars of economic impact to the businesses and tax base of Poulsbo each year. This partnership is just one more way for us to serve our citizens better in that capacity.

As our two entities move forward in this project, it is our hope that we can share a larger vision for the downtown waterfront area that will benefit everyone in the future. The following is a summary of what the Port feels is needed to fulfill its responsibility to the public at large, Port District residents, the boating community, and the environment.

### **BACKGROUND**

Since the earliest Suquamish settlement at the head of Liberty Bay, the waterfront has been the focus of the community now known as Poulsbo. Since the 1800's, there have been docks along the waterfront to serve the fishing fleet and public waterborne transportation. Over the course of decades these docks have evolved into what is now known as the Poulsbo Marina. The marina and breakwater shelter Poulsbo's waterfront, and serve as safe harbor for 253 permanently moored vessels and up to 130 visiting vessels. The guest moorage facility was originally constructed in the early 1970's. By the end of the 1980's it had grown to its current capacity. Whereas the permanent moorage facility was built using tax dollars and operating revenue, much of the money used to build the guest moorage facility came from the State of Washington through various grant programs administered by what is now known as the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

Whenever using RCO grants to fund a project, the grant recipient agrees to become bound by a set of rules established by the RCO. In general, the rules require that facilities be made available to the general public and that any modifications or removal of facilities be approved by the RCO. In the case of the

Poulsbo Marina guest moorage facility, this includes the building located at the south end of Poulsbo's waterfront park. This building, which was constructed in 1983, not only provides restroom facilities, but also shower stalls, a laundry, picnic, waste management and maintenance areas. The building is well maintained and used, but due to years of service, the RCO considers that the facility has met its useful life and is obsolete. This helps pave the way for the City and Port to combine resources and work together on a new solution to the public facilities available in the waterfront park area.

## **PORT DISTRICT NEEDS**

Currently, the marina building and surrounding port property provides; 6 toilets and 6 showers, (3 of each in the women and men rooms, currently no family or unisex facilities); Laundry room (contains 2 washers and 2 dryers); Maintenance/mop area; Propane tank site; Material storage; Public message board; Picnic area; and waste management area (1 four yard garbage dumpster and 2 sixty gallon recycle containers).

At the very least, the Port needs to maintain the same level of amenities and function as is currently provided by the port building and grounds.

## **BASIC CONSIDERATIONS**

Our vision for a new public park building is one that fits well into the landscape, heritage and layout of the park, marina entrance and waterfront. It should have separate areas for restrooms and showers, perhaps separated by a breezeway. Then imagine if you will, a viewing deck for a roof, providing the public with even more space to enjoy the park setting. The inclusion of a viewing deck overlying the new facility would result in a net gain of useable park space by removal of the old mid-park bathroom. It is likely that combining resources will result in a much improved and more attractive public restroom, far beyond the simple replacement of the existing structure with a similar footprint.

There is an additional unique opportunity to further improve public access, increase park space and provide substantial environmental mitigation by **removal of the current port building at the water's edge**. The commissioners believe that the possible conversion of this building and grounds, to allow public access to a rare portion of the downtown waterfront, is a matter of high public interest and value. It is also imperative to provide first class replacement of the current marina facilities to help ensure the economic vitality of the marina.

A new "front row" pedestrian space with full, easy access, unparalleled views of Liberty Bay, the Olympics and Mount Rainier, and attractive surfacing and railing would be an enormous enhancement to the community waterfront.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

An expanded recycling and garbage area in the rear of the building could allow for accommodation of the needs of the Anderson Parkway restaurants in addition to the waterfront park and marina users.

Inclusion of a mixed waste disposal as suggested by the city planning department in a recent review would qualify the marina for an environmentally prestigious "5 star" designation.

The Shoreline Master Program and DOE guidelines have a strong aversion to overwater structures, particularly nearshore. Relocation of current overwater functions such as the marina moorage counter and office would allow for elimination of the current floating office and add additional transient moorage.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the Port District is looking forward to working with the City to take advantage of a truly "once in a generation" opportunity to improve a public service and enhance public access to the waterfront. By combining our resources, we can give the citizens a world class facility, improve the aquatic environment, and provide a positive community and economic impact.

Sincerely,

Poulsbo Port District

Board of Commissioners