



► **Conclusion:
A Vision for the Future**

**OREGON PORT OF WILLAMETTE
BROOKS INTERMODAL FACILITY**

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A Vision for the Future

A Mid-Willamette Valley intermodal facility has been needed in this state for the better part of a decade, is needed now, and will be needed in the future. As demonstrated throughout this application, the most appropriate site for the Mid-Willamette Valley intermodal facility is Brooks, and the Oregon Port of Willamette team will ensure that it exceeds expectations to serve current and future needs.

For the Oregon Port of Willamette, the past guides the future. Kevin Mannix began the Oregon Shipping Group after farmer friends encouraged him to address the demise of container shipping at the Port of Portland. Listening to Willamette Valley farmers, the Oregon Shipping Group began work on initiatives to enhance freight shipping capabilities for farms and businesses in the Willamette Valley. Some of those farmers now make up part of the ownership of the Oregon Port of Willamette and will continue ensuring that the needs of farmers are always the focus of the Oregon Port of Willamette. Farmers who are providing the land for the Brooks ITF are also owners of the Oregon Port of Willamette, and the proceeds they receive from selling their land will go back into our communities here in Oregon.

The future is bright for Willamette Valley farmers, and it is made brighter by the fact that farmers will be in control of a critical piece of the supply chain – an inland port.

Heart of a Transportation Network

The vision for the Oregon Port of Willamette has never been a vision for a cookie cutter intermodal facility or another industrial park. The vision has been to establish a facility that can act as the heart of a transportation network, pumping freight shipments by rail in and out of strategic locations through Oregon and the region. Oregon's shortline railroads are underutilized, but present great potential for the future. To capture that potential, a facility must be developed that can act as a hub and spoke, moving freight on and off rail at a location that maximizes the throughput of the hub and spoke system.

Initially, linking the Mid-Willamette Valley by rail to the ports of Seattle and Tacoma must take priority, as those ports currently provide critical maritime links for Willamette Valley agricultural producers. But over time, new maritime links must be developed for Oregon. Growing population and growing freight demands will increase the need to move freight off highways and onto rail. The International Port of Coos Bay, once the largest lumber and timber port in the world, has tremendous geographic capability to handle international shipping and great potential as a new Oregon gateway port for container ships.

The highway connection to Coos Bay is not conducive to the movement of heavy freight, so rail capabilities connecting the Port of Coos Bay to the Willamette Valley

must be prioritized. The Brooks ITF, with a direct connection to the Portland & Western Railroad (PNWR) mainline, will provide a critical rail link between the Port of Coos Bay and the Willamette Valley. For reference, a map created by ODOT showing all Oregon Railroads is included in the Appendix.

Ports along the Columbia River will continue to have great capability to move freight. Barge services from Port Westward at the Port of St. Helens have been evaluated for decades. The PNWR links the Brooks ITF to this site and can send freight between Brooks and this Port by rail rather than over the road, which prevents/alleviates congestion in the Portland region. The PNWR also connects with the Albany and Eastern Railroad, which can extend the reach of the Brooks ITF to Lebanon, Sweet Home and Lyons.

The Salem airport is within proximity of the Brooks ITF. This presents future opportunities to link air and ground freight options. As our nation and the world continue to embrace e-commerce, the ability to connect highway, rail and air modes will become increasingly valuable.

The Oregon Port of Willamette will continue to embrace passenger rail opportunities that better connect Oregonians by rail. To keep the price of admission for passenger rail reasonable, freight movements must help finance maintenance and upkeep of rail lines in conjunction with passenger rail enterprises. The best way to demonstrate the capabilities and importance of rail to a person, is to move that person smoothly from Point A to Point B. The Oregon Port of Willamette will continue working with passenger rail stakeholders to enhance passenger and commuter rail options throughout the Willamette Valley and to Southern Oregon.

Zero Emissions Future

The Oregon Port of Willamette will continue in the spirit of Oregon to pioneer environmental stewardship by focusing on the use of existing technologies and modes of transportation with low and zero emissions outputs, while striving to adopt technological advancements in the near future to realize a completely zero emissions intermodal network. Railroads are currently the most environmentally sound way to move freight over land, with a single freight train being capable of replacing several hundred trucks. Railroads continuously seek to reduce fuel consumption, implementing data systems, sensors and controls that improve efficiency by up to 14% depending on the route and locomotives used. The Oregon Port of Willamette will be an efficient and effective conduit for the movement of freight between truck and rail and will promote utilization of equipment with low and zero emissions throughout the transportation industry.

The Oregon Port of Willamette has engaged renewable resources providers to optimize the inland port's operations for energy efficiency and sustainability with existing technology. Zero-emissions equipment that is currently available and feasible will be

deployed at the Oregon Port of Willamette. Short-term business practices of the Oregon Port of Willamette will contemplate and plan for adoption of zero-emissions equipment not currently available or feasible. The Oregon Port of Willamette will also evaluate economic incentives to determine how best to encourage customers of the intermodal and transload facility to adopt energy efficient technologies.

Embrace Innovation

The transportation world we live in is growing at a rate exceeding 14% every three years. With infrastructure aging, replacements are focusing now on maximizing opportunities. In today's world, the standard is clear – efficiency can only be found in value impacting every aspect of a supply chain. At the forefront of this drive is real time technology. Real time technology is advancing at an immeasurable pace and is now able to detect the most minor occurrences taking place in any number of supply chains around the world. Data produced by this real time technology is steering the development of modern facilities, which will carry the responsibility of effective logistics over the next twenty years.

Freight volumes are projected to increase by more than 40 percent in the next 25 years, driven primarily by new technology. Incorporating modern technology, including blockchain technology and automation, into future planning for an inland port is necessary to stay competitive and fully optimize the port's opportunities to serve the market. Planning and implementation must leverage technology to balance customer expectations with operational functionality, addressing facility operating plans to best manage bottlenecks or dwell times in real time. Operating scenarios must be modeled regularly to ensure maximization of equipment use and space and storage/stacking methods. Each scenario should have its minimum expectations and maximum limits detailed so as to avoid worst-case scenarios. The Oregon Port of Willamette Team has the experience and knowledge necessary to leverage these technological advances to enhance Oregon's ability to move freight efficiently, reliably and cost-effectively.

The location today still plays a very important role as it did more than a century ago. In fact, today the emphasis on access is contingent upon sustainability and expansion. Forward steps are calculated and thoroughly studied before action is taken. The Oregon Port of Willamette's vision of an intermodal freight transportation network for Oregon focuses on the cultivation of new standards in freight transportation for the state and region, with a view of modernizing infrastructure to provide Oregon industry with a vital link to foreign and domestic markets.

Education and Workforce Development

The education and development of intermodal terminal employees and decision-makers has become more challenging in recent years given technological and global business advancements. That includes not only current employees but also apprenticeships and internships, taking advantage of on-site capability and local community college

programs. The goal is to create and support professional development that is multi-disciplinary and that encourages life-long involvement.

That goal can be achieved by including transportation and logistics education at elementary and secondary schools. That process continues with supporting transportation and logistics career opportunities and courses at the college and university levels.

At the apprenticeship and internship level, such programs are in most cases specifically organized to support non-academic students who are looking for more hands-on professional careers. This will involve the training and use of modern handling equipment such as fork-lifts and computers, with close supervision and certification by recognized academic and business organizations. To make this a success it will be necessary to develop a central system to keep track of the progress of the students as they go through their academic and practical training.

The education and training of the workforce includes specific administrative and technical skills, certification, on-the-job training and mentoring. Later, the scope of education and training will include transportation engineers and planners, carrier and physical distribution operations management, and repair and maintenance of handling equipment. To make this all happen will require the support and participation by government and private sector leaders. The Oregon Port of Willamette has incorporated education into the plans before you and has engaged highly qualified educational professionals and institutions. Proper education is necessary to the future of transportation and the Oregon Port of Willamette will be proud to continue its commitment to education and workforce development as it carries forward with development and operations of the Brooks Intermodal and Transload Facility.