

PARTIAL DRAFT

III. The Planning Context (Challenges We Face)

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS (SWOT) IDENTIFIED BY THE CAC

The current **STRENGTHS** of the Port of Port Townsend include the following:

- Boat Haven Facility:
 - Supports a blue-collar maritime tradition
 - Is a working boat yard
 - Is a publicly accessible boat yard, where owners are able to work on own vessels, adding to the vitality of the facility and community
 - Travel lifts facilitate maritime industry
- Traditional Maritime Culture:
 - Port Townsend has retained its character as a working waterfront town
 - Community supports a diverse and experienced marines trades workforce
 - Local marine trades craftsmen enjoy a reputation for excellence
 - Maritime educational nonprofit organizations support traditional maritime culture
 - Local maritime industry holds an historic niche/brand, providing a secure market share (i.e., traditional maritime trades, like sail making and wooden boat building)
 - Wooden Boat Festival helps to maintain/strengthen traditional maritime culture
- Attractive & Unique Location:
 - Port properties lie at the “heart” of the community and significantly define its character as a working waterfront town
 - Boat Haven and Point Hudson properties anchor Port Townsend’s waterfront and tie it together with the historic Downtown
 - Port facilities are well located – for both boaters and marine trades – proximity of the boat yard to the marina is advantageous
 - Position on north Puget Sound is excellent for recreational boating, and recreational and commercial fishing

- Local Climate:
 - Mild weather and comparatively low rainfall facilitate on the water recreation
 - Benign weather facilitates nearly year-round work in the Boat Yard
- Port Townsend/Jefferson County Community:
 - Values environmental stewardship
 - Possesses a diversity of highly educated, intelligent and talented people
 - Has a tradition of forging successful partnerships with non-profit groups and private businesses
- Political Support from City & County: Coupled with the Port's statutory authority – support provides a solid basis for promoting sustainable economic development
- Public Ownership of Key Waterfront Areas
- Economic Diversity: Some are large, but most businesses are small and medium sized
- Port is Financially Solvent
- Strong Port Staff

The current WEAKNESSES of the Port of Port Townsend include the following:

- Shortage of Available Land & Infrastructure:
 - Lack of basic infrastructure (e.g., water/wastewater) – existing infrastructure is aging and in need of repair
 - Constrained footprint of facilities – areas for upland expansion are very limited
 - Boat Haven Marina too small to meet long term growth needs – both for moorage and yard space
 - Limited land and moorage capacity defines Port's market and creates intense competition among stakeholder groups (Port tasked with being all things to all people)
- Contentious Port & Community Political Culture:
 - Highly politicized culture as it relates to land use/infrastructure issues
 - Difficulty in achieving stakeholder and community consensus
 - Competing perspectives of County and City
 - Port mistrusted by some communities/stakeholder groups

- Resources underused due to inadequate Port/County/City coordination
- Lack of interest in, or understanding of, Port's authority, role and activities
- Disconnect between public expectations versus available revenues
- Competition between stakeholder groups for attention and scarce resources (e.g., transient versus local "blue collar" tenants, airport users versus moorage tenants)
- Port Perceived as "Facility Managers" Not Economic Development Leaders
- Inadequate Policy & Planning Framework:
 - Lack of clear Port policy regarding what types of economic development should be supported (i.e., not all development that comes along is desired by the community or a good community fit)
 - Absence of longer term capital plan
 - Lack of planning results in a focus on maintaining/augmenting existing sources of revenue rather than facilitating the creation of new ventures
- Problems with Port Organizational/Operational/Internal Culture:
 - Internal organizational structure/chain of command insufficiently defined
 - Port senior management staff influence on decision-making
 - Insufficient customer orientation – tenants treated as "have nots", staff at times unresponsive
 - Lack of track record of effective community involvement and communication – Port operations not clearly understood
 - Port perceived by some stakeholder groups as operating like a top down military bureaucracy – "exploiting" its position as landowner in the landlord/tenant relationship (e.g., cost shifting, raising moorage rates to cover debts unrelated to marina)
 - Focus on accommodating larger yachts encourages the perception that the Port is elitist
 - Port focuses on its own bottom line, rather than "triple bottom line" (i.e., economic, environmental, social)
 - Lack of women in Port organization
- Local Economic Conditions:
 - Weak National, State and local economy threatens Port operations (i.e., Boat Yard suffering, as are local visitor-oriented businesses)

- Local marine trades are narrowly focused/limited – business needed from out of the immediate area
- Lack of affordable housing coupled with limited industry support for school age families results in a shrinking labor force and a more pronounced – jobs/housing imbalance
- Seasonality of local trades/businesses, especially marine-related (e.g., tourist shoulder seasons)
- Distance from population centers places strains on local enterprise (i.e., visitation dependent upon fuel prices)
- Workforce Demographics:
 - Highly skilled marine trades workforce is aging, with prospects for a successor generation dim
 - Critical workforce skills in jeopardy due to lack of available training (e.g., welding)
 - Graying population means a highly educated populace on fixed incomes along with a shrinking labor force that limits local industry
- Mixed Perception of the Quality of Local Marine Trades
- Loss of Port of Entry Status:
 - Diminishes visitation by Canadians
 - Decreases visits by tall ships
- Education: Opportunities for vocational training related to critical local trades are inadequate
- Unrealized Tourism Potential in South County
- Increasing Difficulties for Small Boat Owners:
 - Diminishing points of access to marine waters (e.g., fewer boat ramps)
 - WDFW management policies (i.e., fish closures) increase competition for use of available facilities
 - Rebuild of A/B dock likely to result in fewer slips under 25 feet

The current OPPORTUNITIES presented to the Port of Port Townsend include the following:

- Community Collaboration/Consensus Building:
 - Opportunity for citizens, stakeholders, City and County governments and the Port to cooperate more effectively to achieve clearly identified community goals

- Occasion for the Port to take the lead in providing more fair and equitable service to its customers and community (e.g., to implement a “cost center” management perspective, rather than “cost shifting”)
- Opportunity to promote volunteerism in pursuing community/Port objectives
- Economic Development Leadership:
 - Port can work with the community to better define its role and mission in promoting targeted and sustainable economic development
 - Port can leverage its statutory authority to more effectively influence the local economy through targeted projects
 - Port can take a leading role in promoting the “new” economy – promoting green jobs and the use of new energy sources and emerging technologies
 - Port can serve as an economic catalyst by providing locations for business startups and spearheading local economic development initiatives
- Partnerships with Local Governments, Non-Profits & Businesses
 - Large opportunity to more effectively define and coordinate the efforts of the Port, City, County and local non-profits (e.g., the NWMC) to avoid overlapping and duplicative economic development efforts
 - Opportunity to forge grant money partnerships with local non-profits to fund projects (e.g., NWMC/City streetscape improvements)
 - Port can help the City implement the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Master Program
- Changing Land Uses & Designations:
 - Opportunity to explore the expansion of land use and zoning designations supporting light manufacturing (e.g., at the Jefferson County International Airport)
 - Opportunity to more efficiently allocate land leases in the upland areas of the Boat Haven
- Improved Marketing/Branding:
 - Prospect exists for Port Townsend/Jefferson County to serve as a worldwide model as a sustainable maritime community
 - Opportunity for Port to take a larger role in marketing the Port and solidifying the niche/brand of the community
 - Continued/expanded support of the Wooden Boat Festival

- Opportunity to market “Mid-Channel Bank” as the best King Salmon fishing location on Puget Sound – creating a magnet for recreational fishermen
- Changes in Communications Network & Information Technology: Expanded broadband fiber network will change wireless communications and provide new economic development opportunities
- Education/Vocational Training:
 - Opportunity to support greater marine trades-related vocational education (e.g., composite materials, welding)
 - Vocational training can help to provide viable career paths for local youth, thereby mitigating the trend towards a retirement residential community
- Expanded South County Involvement:
 - Provide more support to Coast Oyster
 - Explore opportunities for partnering with Black Point Development Corporation to expand south Jefferson County visitation

The current THREATS confronting the Port of Port Townsend include the following:

- Increasingly politicized and polarized community threatens efforts to achieve a community consensus regarding economic development
- Land Use/Infrastructure:
 - Without expanded zoning for light manufacturing uses, future prospects for local economic growth are threatened
 - Aging/failing, inadequately maintained infrastructure endangers continuation of existing operations
 - Cost of repairing/replacing failing infrastructure limits the ability to pursue new initiatives
 - Cost of replacing failing infrastructure at odds with maintaining low moorage rates
- Inadequate Planning/Management:
 - Lack of clear policies and objectives causes confusion as to mission and role
 - Lack of policy priorities results in missed economic development opportunities and dissipation of scarce organizational resources (both human and financial)
 - Inadequate management misuses meager financial resources

- Cost shifting from the Boat Haven Marina to other Port facilities, coupled with rising moorage rates to fund infrastructure repairs, threatens existence of small wooden boat culture
- Increasingly Weak Economy:
 - Rising costs of materials, housing, insurance, etc. undermine the ability of local businesses to effectively compete
 - Shrinking national economy especially threatens marine trades that depend upon recreational/pleasure boating
 - Fuel costs threaten recreational boating and tourist visitation
- Changes in the Regulatory Environment:
 - Changes in Federal/State requirements are difficult to anticipate and continue to increase the cost of Port operations
- Competition from Other Ports:
 - More organized/focused and better managed Ports
 - More advantageously located Ports (i.e., closer to Puget Sound population centers)
 - Transportation links to and from the North Quimper Peninsula create supply difficulties for some industrial uses that other Ports do not face
- Fishing Industry Shifting Away from Puget Sound: As this occurs, the business niche for providing haul-out and repair services to this industry will also shift
- Limited Future Financial Capability & Options for New Initiatives:
 - Past decisions significantly limit the Port's present options for new initiatives
 - In turn, this threatens to further degrade the Port's community perception and capabilities