



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHARLES D. KILBURY OVERPASS DEDICATION

(Pasco, WA) On Thursday, September 14, 2006, the Port of Pasco and City of Pasco will host a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly completed SR-397 Charles D. Kilbury Overpass. The event will begin at 2 p.m. at the summit of the overpass, located just west of the Port's Administration Office on Ainsworth Avenue. **The public is invited.** Parking will be allowed on the closed sections of Ainsworth Avenue.

Pasco Mayor Joyce Olson reports, "This project is a good example of what we can accomplish when we work together. The City and Port formed this project partnership in 1997 and we worked jointly over the ensuing seven years to get the project ready for construction, ultimately working with the legislature to obtain the funding necessary to make the project a reality."

Total cost of the project was \$9.2 million. Senator Mike Hewitt and Representative Shirley Hankins played key roles in securing the major funding for the project. In April 2004, the Washington State Legislature approved the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Boards allocation of \$5.2 million dollars for construction of the project. Other funding partners for the project included the Transportation Improvement Board, the City of Pasco, the Port of Pasco, Washington State Department of Transportation and Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

The Port and City had already completed design and engineering work as well as moving a sewer lift station in order to make the project construction ready. “Having the project ready to build was a major boost in obtaining the funding to complete the project,” stated Randy Hayden, director of planning and engineering at the Port of Pasco.

On August 15, 2006, the Washington Transportation Commission voted unanimously to name the SR-397 Ainsworth Avenue Overpass for Charles D. Kilbury, a former Washington State Legislative representative and a long active City of Pasco Councilmember.

“It was the perfect fit for Charlie. He was a career railroad man and was considered by everyone to be the regional railroad expert. He was also the biggest champion on transportation issues in Washington State,” stated Ernie Boston, Port of Pasco Commission President.

SR-397 is the busiest train crossing in the Tri-Cities and is a major freight corridor that supports the movement of heavy equipment manufacturing, vegetable processing and cold storage facilities, grain shipping terminals and large scale warehousing. The construction of the overpass eliminates a major impediment to the efficient movement of product and provides unobstructed access to the interstate system and the Port of Pasco’s Intermodal barge and rail terminal.

The overpass includes pedestrian and bicycle paths which will tie together the Port of Pasco’s walking trail to Sacajawea State Park and the City of Pasco’s trail along the Columbia River shoreline.

Work on the overpass began in January. Thanks to the cooperation of nearby residents and businesses, Ainsworth Avenue was able to be closed during construction, shortening the construction time from 12 months to only 8 months.

The overpass will open following the event on September 14, 2006.

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