



For Immediate Release

January 25, 2017

It's Finished!

Tri-Cities Airport Expansion Ribbon Cutting Marks End of 2 ½ Year Project

On Friday, January 27, the Port of Pasco will celebrate the end of the expansion of the Tri-Cities Airport with a dedication ceremony beginning at 11 a.m. at the airport. Due to space limitations, the event is invitation-only. However, public tours of the expanded airport are being given from 3 to 5 PM the same day.

The \$41.9 million, 2½-year renovation was the largest project in the history of the Port. An additional \$16 million was required for improvements to the airfield and runway system to accommodate the expanded terminal.

Among those attending will be U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell, and Washington State Senator Sharon Brown. "The Tri-Cities area is a vital part of our state's economic engine. Between the terminal expansion and new destinations to choose from, the Tri-Cities Airport is primed to see strong passenger growth," said Senator Cantwell. The Senator was instrumental in securing a \$11M grant for terminal security improvements and \$8M for new outbound baggage screening equipment. She also supported a \$750k grant from the US Department of Transportation to help the airport and community in our efforts to attract new direct, daily service to Los Angeles.

"This will be an exciting day for the region," said Port of Pasco Commission President Ron Reimann. "As a community, we have watched, and in some cases navigated through, the construction. Now is the time to cut the ribbon so we can all enjoy our new airport."

The first phase of the expanded airport opened in September 2015.

The expansion project included nearly every aspect of airport operations. Key components included:

- Doubling the size of the terminal
- Reconfiguring the public entry area of the terminal
- Expanding the concourse and boarding areas
- Increasing to five boarding gates

- Moving the restaurant and bar to the secure side of the airport
- Adding a snack bar to the public side of the airport
- Adding additional security screening lines and queue lines
- Adding a children's play area with the help of a \$50,000 grant from the BNSF Railway Foundation
- Moving the TSA baggage screening equipment behind the ticket counters
- Renovating the baggage claim and car rental areas
- Realigning the front of the terminal building to create better traffic flow

The airport was designed to have a distinctive Mid-Columbia feel that is reflected in the river design running through the flooring, large glass photographs of our natural landscape, and the inclusion of 42 unique art tiles along the terminal walls and columns each designed by local artists.

“It is an important entryway into our community and will provide a great first impression to visitors and business travelers,” said Reimann. “The expansion of the airport is also a vital economic driver for the Tri-Cities, providing greater opportunity for new flights to new destinations and opening up new markets for regional businesses.”

Airport boardings have remained strong over the past seven years with record-breaking numbers averaging 7 percent growth per year, which helped drive the need for the airport expansion. Enplanement numbers for 2016 were at an all-time high, reaching over 374,000.

“The Port Commission’s primary focus was to build a facility that would accommodate long-term growth and promote the economic growth of our region without using Port District tax dollars, and we have achieved that vision,” said Reimann.

“We had an amazing team of players in the creation and construction of this new terminal including the Federal Aviation Administration, Mead & Hunt Architects & Engineers, JUB Engineers, CKJT Architects, Strategic Construction Management, and Bouten Construction and their team of contractors. They were instrumental in bringing this project in on-time and most importantly within budget. We are deeply appreciative of their hard work,” he said.

The Tri-Cities Airport serves Southeastern Washington, Northeastern Oregon and parts of central Idaho, an area of roughly 1 million people. No other commercial airport in the region provides the array of direct flights, which includes daily service to Seattle, Portland, Denver, Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Minneapolis/St. Paul as well as weekly flights to Las Vegas and Phoenix/Mesa and summer service to Los Angeles.

The community is invited to tour the expanded airport on Friday, January 27, between 3 and 5 p.m. Tours run every 5 minutes, and require preregistration. There are a limited number of spots, so those wishing a tour are encouraged to call (509) 547-3378 as soon as possible.

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For more information and interviews:

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