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Port of Walla Walla and Partners Secure Historic \$108.5 Million from the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program for the U.S. Highway 12 Phase 8 Corridor Completion Project

Walla Walla, WA – The Port of Walla Walla, in collaboration with Walla Walla County and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), is proud to announce the award of a historic \$108.5 million Rural Surface Transportation Grant, the largest award of its kind, for the U.S. Highway 12 Phase 8 Corridor Completion Project. This funding will move us closer to the completion of a critical infrastructure development that will enhance safety, improve reliability, support emergency services, and strengthen economic connectivity throughout the region.

Port Executive Director Patrick Reay celebrated the milestone, stating, “This award represents a historic investment in the final phase of the U.S. Highway 12 four-laning project. This initiative has been a priority for our community since the 1970’s, when then-Washington State Senator Jeanette Hayner emphasized the safety concerns and the need for better connectivity between our community and the rest of the state. After decades of planning and perseverance, we are finally nearing the completion of a project that will save lives and spur economic growth within the region.”

Port Commission President Kip Kelly highlighted the collaborative efforts behind the achievement, saying, “This award reflects over two decades of dedicated work by the Port of Walla Walla and the U.S.12 Coalition—a partnership of private businesses, local governments, Walla Walla County, City of Walla Walla, and WSDOT—to enhance U.S. Highway 12’s safety and realignment. As someone who has actively advocated for this funding in Washington, D.C., I am deeply grateful to our federal delegation for their unwavering support. Their efforts have been instrumental in making this long-standing vision a reality.”

Walla Walla County Commissioner Todd Kimball underscored the significance of the project for the community, stating, “The completed realignment will not only improve safety and dependability but also deliver substantial benefits to regional commerce and our agricultural community. This is a win for every resident and business that relies on this essential corridor.”

The Port extends its heartfelt appreciation to Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell for their steadfast leadership in advancing this project and other critical infrastructure projects across Washington State. The Port also acknowledges the crucial contributions of Congressman Dan Newhouse and former Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, whose advocacy has been pivotal to this project's success.

Additionally, the Port recognizes Michele Beener of Aspire Grant & Development and Mark Dedrick and Terry Heubert of Summit Strategies for their critical roles in securing this transformative grant.

“This funding demonstrates the power of collaboration among local, state, and federal partners working toward a shared vision,” Reay concluded. “We remain committed to working with our state and federal delegations, along with our local partners, to secure the additional funding necessary to complete this vital corridor.”

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