

MINUTES

COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY BOARD MEETING

July 16, 2024

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

PRESIDING: Darcy Long, Chair

BOARD PRESENT: Staci Coburn, Walter Denstedt, Scott Hege, Kristen Lillvik, Timothy McGlothlin, Dan Richardson, Marcus Swift

BOARD ABSENT: Ben Wring

STAFF PRESENT: Director and Urban Renewal Manager Joshua Chandler, Economic Development Officer Dan Spatz, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, Secretary Paula Webb

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Long at 5:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Long led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Richardson and seconded by Coburn to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 8/0; Coburn, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, Long, McGlothlin, Richardson, and Swift voting in favor, none opposed, Wring absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Denstedt and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the minutes of June 18, 2024 as submitted. The motion carried 8/0; Coburn, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, Long, McGlothlin, Richardson, and Swift voting in favor, none opposed, Wring absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Clair Graper, no address given

Ms. Graper read from her submission to the Board, Attachment 1. Ms. Graper apologized for her inaccurate statements on Facebook.

Richard Wolfe, no address given

Mr. Wolfe invited the Board to meet with Andrea Klaas and Jennifer Toepke from Port of The Dalles, on July 17, 2024.

Mr. Wolfe referred to an article emailed to the Board, Attachment 2. He said the 1938 commercial dock project created a bustling city. The whole promenade idea, the train stop, was really there. Mr. Wolfe hopes to bring that in as part of urban renewal awareness.

Mr. Wolfe met with Eric Gleason and visited the Wing Hong Hai building (commonly known as the Chinese Building). Photos within the building represented a wharf frontage that created shade.

Mr. Wolfe believed he could help save money on projects from Lewis & Clark Festival Park up to E. 4th Street.

ACTION ITEMS

Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Plan Update: Recommendation to Council

Economic Development Officer (EDO) Spatz presented the staff report. He highlighted some revisions to the Plan.

Board Member Swift thanked EDO Spatz for his work.

EDO Spatz had a modification to the proposed motion, "Accept revised draft of the Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Plan and adopt Resolution 24-004 recommending approval of the proposed amendments by The Dalles City Council **to take the form of a Council approved amendment.**"

Chair Long thanked EDO Spatz for his research and compilation of the documentation.

Board Member Richardson echoed Board Member Swift's and Chair Long's thanks. He appreciated the list of projects over the Agency's history. If everything a person or an Agency takes on is completed exactly as planned, they weren't thinking big enough, he said. Urban Renewal has had a variety of projects of different scales, some successful, some let go, but he very much appreciated the history.

EDO Spatz called attention to the interactive map which contains 72 Urban Renewal projects. The Board recommended an article or press release to highlight the Agency's efforts.

It was moved by Richardson and seconded by Denstedt to accept the revised draft of the Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Plan and adopt Resolution 24-004 recommending approval of the proposed amendments by The Dalles City Council to take the form of a Council approved amendment. The motion carried 8/0; Coburn, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, Long, McGlothlin, Richardson, and Swift voting in favor, none opposed, Wring absent.

Endorsement of 2024 Transportation Growth Management Application

EDO Spatz presented the staff report.

Director Chandler said he worked on this project with two of his predecessors. The grant was awarded to the City. Subsequently, the City returned this grant due to staffing concerns. Staff decided to reapply for the grant due to varying levels of need on the west side of The Dalles.

EDO Spatz said the project title is West Side Renaissance Master Plan. A small section of the Urban Renewal district is within that boundary. Back in 1990, it was very much a part of the

entire district. City Council provided the required authorization to submit for the grant. Staff is asking for the endorsement of the Urban Renewal Board.

Board Member Denstedt asked if the City would be responsible for administrative tasks. EDO Spatz said that was correct. Board Member Denstedt then asked if there was a match requirement. EDO Spatz thought staff time would cover the requirement.

It was moved by Coburn and seconded by Denstedt to endorse the 2024 Transportation Growth Management funding request to the Oregon Department of Transportation for the West Side Renaissance Master Plan. The motion carried 8/0; Coburn, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, Long, McGlothlin, Richardson, and Swift voting in favor, none opposed, Wring absent.

Tony's Site Redevelopment Options

EDO Spatz presented the staff report and a brief summary of past steps.

During the January through June meetings, discussion included a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI). At the June meeting, the direction received was to proceed with an RFEI.

The survey resulted in the following most popular suggestions:

- Public gathering space (including greenways, parks, places for children)
- Residential development
- Commercial space (restaurant or market)
- Limited interest in parking (not recommended by Agency Staff)

David and Kirsten Benko, National Neon Sign Museum, proposed locating the Jantzen Beach Carousel on the property.

Staff would like to propose an RFEI that would consider public interest in open space in conjunction with Federal Street Plaza.

Director Chandler added this discussion is to determine what the Agency would, and would not, like to see on the site. When building or not building, we have to consider the direct impact on taxes compared to the indirect impact on taxes. A building would have direct impact on taxes; a public space would have an indirect impact on taxes.

Director Chandler referred to the Agency's mission: *The mission of the Urban Renewal Agency is to eliminate blight and depreciating property values within the Agency's jurisdiction and in the process, attract aesthetically pleasing, job producing private investments that will stabilize or increase property values and protect the area's historic places and values.*

Demolition and hazardous abatement eliminates blight. Worth consideration is the statement of "job producing private investments."

Staff is requesting direction. What type of use will add to the fabric we currently have without affecting competing interests?

Board Member Lillvik was in favor of retail space or the carousel, in addition to public space. She wants to ensure the carousel would be a functional space with an operational plan for opening.

MINUTES

Urban Renewal Agency Board Meeting

July 16, 2024

Page 4 of 12

Board Member Richardson was inclined toward an RFEI for potential developers to use half the combined properties for a project, while leaving room for a plaza. He said the Board might consider encouraging the City to take on the Federal St Plaza.

Board Member Denstedt suggested a land swap to allow the carousel at the Tony's site. EDO Spatz noted there would be much to negotiate if the Board took that direction.

Board Member Denstedt said the carousel would attract people.

Chair Long redirected the discussion. She asked, do we want an RFEI, what we definitely do not want, and in general, what do we want? This provides an equal opportunity for everyone to apply for the RFEI, with consideration of all responses on an equal basis, while not advocating for a specific project.

Chair Long was in favor of an RFEI.

Board Member Hege noted building adjacent to the Tony's site is vacant and for sale. From a development standpoint, additional property is there. A plaza would be a good adjunct to the property, but we need to get it into private hands.

Board Member Hege is in favor of the RFEI or RFP to determine interest in the property.

Chair Long shared the need to protect proposal ideas submitted to the Board to prevent a separate party from capitalizing on the idea. EDO Spatz added, responses with intellectual capital invested, significant financial research, or things of that nature, can be kept in confidence. Proprietary information submitted is protected.

Board Member Coburn said an RFEI including the idea of the Federal Street Plaza will allow applicants to plan their proposal around our intent to have a complimentary development.

Board Member Swift agreed with Board Members Lillvik, Hege and Coburn. He suggested an RFEI incorporating the Federal Street Plan. He is opposed to any use of parking.

Board Member McGlothlin supported moving forward to solicit development proposals. He preferred a combination of development and green space. The mission is to add value to the downtown. He is interested in a land swap.

Board Member Lillvik suggested we include the desire for options that face Federal Street Plaza, to encourage use of the space.

Chair Long asked Staff if they had sufficient information to proceed.

Director Chandler replied the RFEI idea should have fewer barriers than an RFP, shaped in a way that is not just another survey. There will be an entry level to submit the RFEI. The RFEI will be a formal process, similar to an RFP. Responses should include a concept plan.

Chair Long stated we should know the applicant's qualifications to bring a project to fruition. They must apply for the RFEI in order to be considered for any future steps.

Board Member Hege said this is very different from a survey. It should be clear we are looking for development, not just ideas. We need to ask how they plan to develop, and if they have the financial resources to undertake the project. Board Member Coburn suggested a timeline, as well.

EDO Spatz said this would be a very structured process. Staff is familiar with grant applications, RFPs and RFEIs. The Board can lend direction toward specific information to

develop a concept. A great amount of detail can be built into the RFEI, short of requiring full-blown architectural and engineering plans.

Chair Long added the Board will put heavier weight on fully developed concepts submitted with information showing how the project will reach completion.

It was moved by Swift and seconded by Richardson to direct Staff to prepare a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) for the Tony's site for review and approval at an upcoming Board meeting. The motion carried 8/0; Coburn, Denstedt, Hege, Lillvik, Long, McGlothlin, Richardson, and Swift voting in favor, none opposed, Wring absent.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

None.

STAFF COMMENTS / PROJECT UPDATES

Director Chandler said First Street conversations continue internally. Next steps should be coordinated with the Public Works Director and City Manager.

Board Member Richardson requested the status of the Incentive Program. EDO Spatz replied we are not currently accepting new proposals. Two projects in progress are ongoing. The Legion Hall project is for HVAC, electrical and plumbing. The Granada Theatre project will replace the current reader board with an electronic reader board, and replace the front doors. Artistic elements will remain in place.

Board Member Richardson said the Board has a significant decision approaching regarding First Street. He hoped the Agency could keep the Incentive Program going.

Chair Long asked if there were any projects that may need to begin before the Board could commit or unfreeze our funds. Should we make changes to our process or create some flexibility? Can the Agency provide assistance later, if the project has already started?

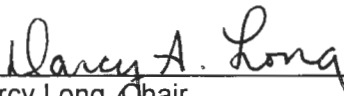
EDO Spatz replied yes, as long as we do not wait too long. We have a few months to decide.

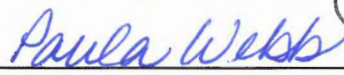
ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

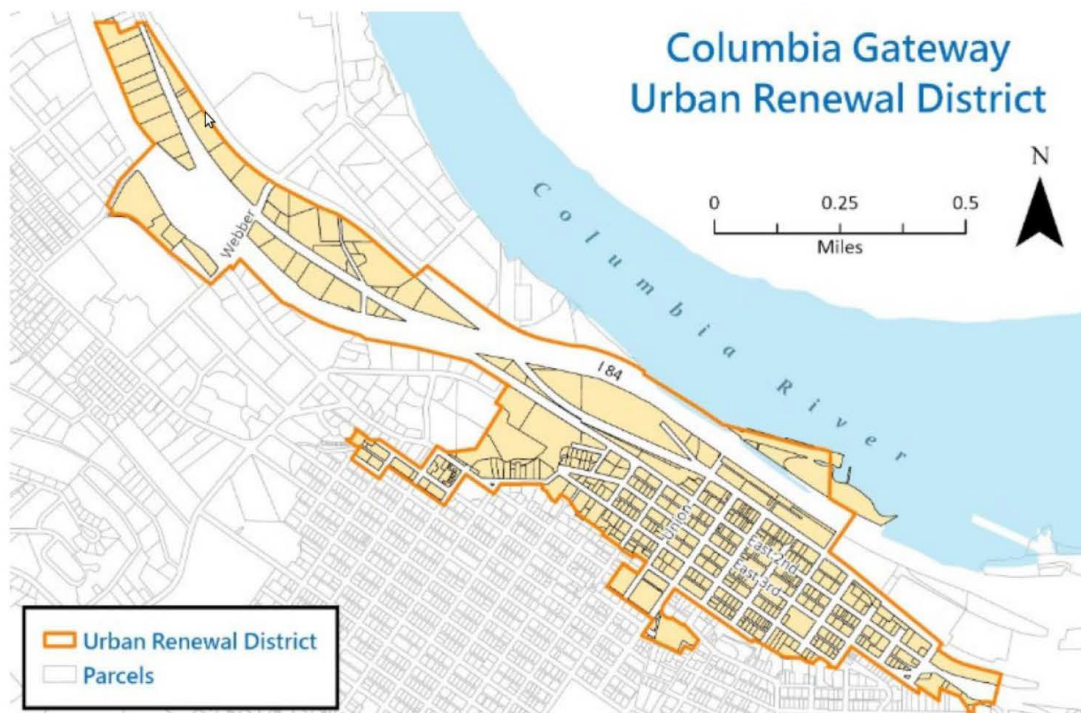
Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

Submitted by/
Paula Webb, Secretary
Community Development Department

SIGNED: 
Darcy Long, Chair

ATTEST: 
Paula Webb, Secretary
Community Development Department

...eliminate blight and depreciating property values within the Agency's jurisdiction and in the process, attract aesthetically pleasing, job producing private investments that will stabilize or increase property values and protect the Area's historic places and values (Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Mission Statement).

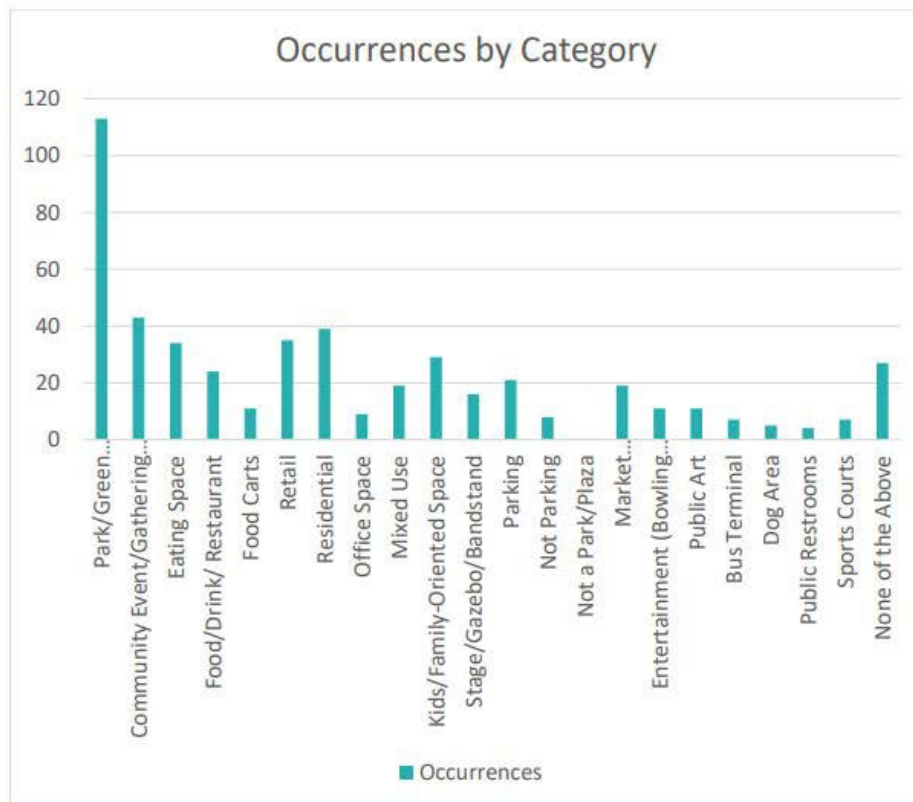


I applaud you, our representatives, in your continued efforts to involve the community in decisions that will have consequences long into our children's future. I know I am not the easiest to deal with and every one of you have always treated me with politeness and respect. I know sometimes my face says stuff when I am not looking...thank you for your kindness.

Please know that I mean no disrespect when I say I feel there is more that could be done to create open dialog, both here and on the council, with our community. I was disheartened when I reviewed the meeting and saw that you had declined to publish the amazing work done by your team. I apologize if my facebook publication was amiss. Thank you Ms Long for the correction and please know I mean no disrespect as I continue to try to let folks know how they can get involved.

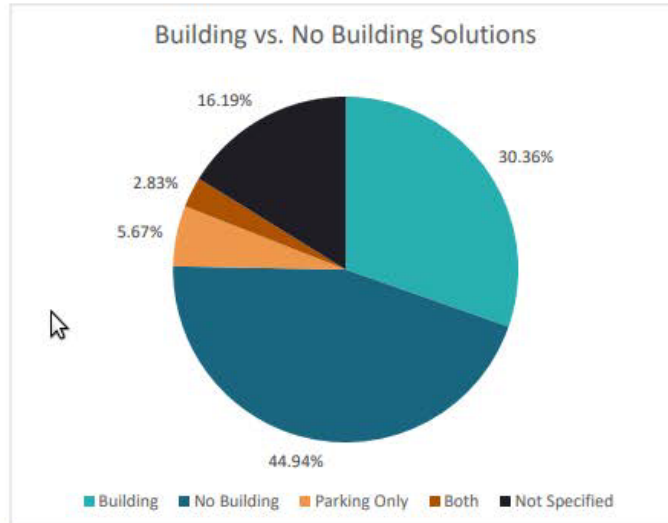
I look forward to the results of the Google funding survey, I am confident other participants look forward to these as well. I hope you are able to get the same quality of coordination for that presentation to City Council.

I think we all know I feel the historic nature of our downtown may be slipping away, but I look forward to some real plans tonight.



This graph displays the number of times each category is mentioned in the responses. Each response, except for "None of the Above," can contain multiple categories, but each category is counted only once per response.

While this graph shows a broad range of interests indicated in the responses, it also highlights a strong preference for the inclusion of some sort of outdoor solution, such as a park or plaza.



This graph categorizes each response into one of five groups: responses that mention a building of some kind; those that specify a park, plaza, or open space; those that only want parking; those that mention both a building and a no building solution; and those that mention neither. Each response is counted only once for this graph.

This graph indicates a notable majority of responses (14% more than those supporting a pro-building solution) who advocate for a no-building solution.

Common themes

Based on the survey responses, the top six most frequently mentioned categories are:

1. **Park/Plaza/Public Square**
 - o Respondents frequently emphasized the importance of having accessible open spaces like parks, plazas, and public squares. These spaces are desired for relaxation, social interactions, community events, and enjoying nature, highlighting the community's preference for outdoor areas that promote well-being and social cohesion.
2. **Community/Event Space**
 - o There is a strong demand for community gathering spaces and event areas where social interactions, public events, concerts, and communal activities can take place. This reflects the community's desire for a central area that fosters a

I feel like respondents were united in wanting a common space to gather. This survey was really a great first step in rebuilding our citizens' connection to our council and our agencies. I am sure we all look forward to hearing from you as to the future of main street and what if any impact the added Google taxes will have on that future. Thank you again!!!

7/16/24, 6:19 AM

Freighter SS Charles L. Wheeler Jr. becomes the first ocean-going vessel to transit the lock at the Columbia River's Bonneville Da...

Freighter SS *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* becomes the first ocean-going vessel to transit the lock at the Columbia River's Bonneville Dam on July 9, 1938.

By Daryl C. McClary
Posted 8/03/2011
HistoryLink.org Essay 9883

On July 9, 1938, the coastal freighter SS *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* became the first deep-sea commercial vessel to voyage up the Columbia River and pass through the lock at Bonneville Dam. The ship, carrying cargo from California, will continue up river to the historic riverboat port of The Dalles, Oregon, 200 river miles from the Pacific Ocean. This historic voyage will make The Dalles the farthest inland port in the West to be visited by an ocean-going vessel. It is essentially a publicity stunt to demonstrate that large freighters can utilize the Columbia to trade directly with river ports in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

A Vessel, a Dam, and a City

The SS *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* was a 2,670-ton, 289-foot, single-screw, steel-hulled freighter built by Albina Engine & Machine Works in Portland, Oregon in 1918. The vessel, originally laid down as the SS *Carl* for Norwegian owners, was requisitioned during World War I (1914-1918) by the United States Shipping Board, Emergency Fleet Corporation, for its Merchant Marine fleet and renamed the USS *Point Judith*. In 1920, the freighter was sold to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, and in 1925 to Swayne & Hoyt Ltd., San Francisco, for service in its Gulf-Pacific Line. In 1929, the *Point Judith* was sold to the McCormick Steamship Company, San Francisco, and renamed the *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* for the 7-year-old son of the vice president and general manager of the corporation.

The Bonneville Dam is located 145 river miles from the mouth of the Columbia River and approximately 40 miles east of Portland, Oregon. Completed in 1938, it was a Public Works Administration/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (1882-1945) New Deal to provide reliable and inexpensive hydroelectric power to the Pacific Northwest, make the Columbia navigable all the way to the Snake River, and aid in flood and erosion control. In its day, the Bonneville Lock, 75 feet wide and 500 feet long, was the highest single-lift lock in the world. It lifted vessels from the river below, more than 58 feet to

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7/16/24, 6:19 AM Freighter SS Charles L. Wheeler Jr. becomes the first ocean-going vessel to transit the lock at the Columbia River's Bonneville Da...

The Dalles, situated on the Columbia River 85 miles east of Portland, is the largest city and the seat of Wasco County, Oregon. In 1938, the city had a population of roughly 8,000 residents (2010 estimated population was 13,200). In anticipation of becoming an active deep-water ocean port, The Dalles Port Authority (established in 1933) built a modern sea terminal at a cost of \$300,000. The port boasted a 1,000-foot-long wharf, able to accommodate three ocean-going freighters simultaneously, three new dockside slewing cranes, each capable of lifting 15,000 pounds, and two huge transit sheds for storage of general cargo. Ideally located, the Port of The Dalles would be able to service the entire Oregon Inland Empire at reduced rates by eliminating the complication and cost of shipping goods overland to Portland by highway and rail. Jobs would be plentiful, the city's population would grow, and the economy of Wasco County, based primarily on agriculture and lumber, would flourish.

From Ocean-going to River-going

On Tuesday, July 5, 1938, Captain Peter Lund moored the *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* at the McCormick Steamship Company terminal, located on the west bank of the Willamette River between the Broadway Bridge and the Steel Bridge, to discharge freight from California ports. The freighter took aboard 1,500 tons of sugar, salt, grain bags, canned goods, and other miscellaneous cargo to be discharged at The Dalles and from there transhipped to cities and towns inland. Thus began the first leg of the *Wheeler's* history-making journey up the Columbia River to inaugurate the lock at the new Bonneville Dam.

On Friday afternoon, July 8, 1938, the *Wheeler* rendezvoused with the 165-foot U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Onondaga* (WPG-79), at Vancouver, Washington. Captain Lund had onboard Captain Arthur H. Riggs (1870-1941), a master mariner and riverboat pilot for 15 years, to guide the freighter on the 40-mile trek up river. The *Wheeler* and *Onondaga* reached the Bonneville Dam at 7:00 p.m., maneuvered into the lock and were lifted to the level of Lake Bonneville. The two ships remained in the lock overnight to await the inauguration ceremony scheduled for Saturday morning. A fleet of 13 boats, carrying celebrities and dignitaries, followed the *Wheeler* and the *Onondaga* from Vancouver and moored at the bottom of the lock to be on hand for this unique maritime event.

Dedications and Celebrations

At 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 9, 1938, Oregon State Governor Charles H. Martin (1863-1946), Washington State Governor Clarence D. Martin (1884-1955), and Idaho State Governor Barzilla W. Clark (1880-1943) stood before a crowd of some 20,000 spectators and unveiled a brass plaque, sponsored by 31 Oregon inland cities and towns. At 9:10 a.m., Governor Charles H. Martin pressed a button that slowly opened the upstream gate of the world's highest lock. There followed a dedication speech by the Oregon governor and at 9:30 a.m. the freighter *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* steamed into Lake Bonneville followed by the cutter *Onondaga* carrying the three state governors plus 75 dignitaries and guests. The event was broadcast nationwide over CBS and NBC affiliated radio stations.

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she could pass under the Bridge of the Gods at Cascade and the Hood River Bridge, farther up-river. The Army Corps of Engineers opened wide several of the Bonneville Dam spillways to drop the level of Lake Bonneville four feet, ensuring that the freighter could sail under the structures without difficulty. It turned out to be a prudent decision as the *Wheeler's* shortened masts cleared the Hood River Bridge by just four feet.

The accompanying fleet rendezvoused with the *Wheeler* and *Onondaga* at Lyle (Klickitat County), Washington, and then convoyed the last eight miles to The Dalles, with flags flying. The vessels arrived at the new wharf promptly at 3:00 p.m. They were welcomed by a crowd of 10,000 spectators, waiting in 98-degree heat to witness the momentous ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opening of the Port of The Dalles new sea terminal. The celebration included exhibitions depicting Oregon history and early modes of transportation and, later in the day, a grand parade. That evening the port authority hosted a banquet in the commodious transit sheds, attended by the three state governors and 500 dignitaries and guests.

Home Journeys

On Sunday, July 10, 1938, the cutter *Onondaga*, having completed the escort assignment, returned to her duty station at Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia River. Meanwhile the *Wheeler* remained at the Port of The Dalles terminal discharging freight and loading cargo and ballast for the return trip.

At 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 12, the *Wheeler* set sail on the last leg of her historic voyage. The ship passed safely under the Hood River Bridge and Bridge of the Gods, handily negotiated the Cascade Rapids and sailed into the Bonneville lock. The Army Corps of Engineer closed many of the spillways, raising Lake Bonneville back to its normal depth of 68 feet and substantially reducing the current down-river. Even so, after leaving the lock, the *Wheeler* traveled through the fast water below Bonneville Dam at a remarkable speed of 18 knots, giving the 1,000 or more onlookers along the riverbank a thrill. At 8:00 p.m., the *Wheeler* and her 32-man crew moored at the McCormick Steamship Company terminal in Portland to load lumber and general cargo for ports in California.

The *Wheeler*, minus her topmasts, set sail from Portland on Saturday, July 16, arriving in her home port of San Francisco on Tuesday, July 19, 1938. Recounting the ship's journey to news reporters, Captain Lund opined it would be at least two years before the sea-lane would be ready for oceangoing vessels. And then only if the river could be properly dredged and the bridges retrofitted with draw spans to allow large ships passage without having to remove sections of superstructure.

The *Charles L. Wheeler Jr.* was the only seagoing commercial vessel to transit the Columbia River as far as The Dalles. There was discussion about instituting regular ocean service to Port of The Dalles, but the business failed to materialize. Shippers continued using river barges, trucks, and freight trains to carry general and bulk cargo over the river route to Portland.

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