

# Public Engagement Process and Farm Plan Report

Port of Port Townsend Short's Family Farm Property

Prepared by University of Washington Master's Students College of Built Environments, Department of Urban Design and Planning June 7, 2024 This report is the result of a collaboration between UW Master's Students, the Port of Port Townsend Staff and Advisors, and the Farm Steering Committee.

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## Introduction

In September 2023, the Commission of the Port of Port Townsend adopted Resolution 797-23, which outlined objectives and subsequent means for guiding the Short's Farm planning process:

## Port of Port Townsend's Key Project Objectives

- Create tangible benefits for local farmers and expand local agricultural production
- Materially improve the environmental conditions and habitat functions
- Achieve 9.5% rate of return on the Port's investment
- Remain consistent with existing land use and regulatory requirements

Also within the Resolution, the Commission expressed a desire to obtain the 'special assistance' of University of Washington Master of Urban Planning students to "facilitate the planning effort and to effectively involve interested citizens and local subject matter experts in developing a Farm Plan to guide future development and use of the property" (Commission of the Port of Port Townsend, 2023).

In January 2024, a UW student team began working on preliminary research on the property and project, ultimately culminating in an Initial Conditions Report (ICR). The first draft of the ICR was submitted to the Farm Steering Committee and the Port of Port Townsend in March 2024. The Report includes information on the property's agricultural and economic context, existing infrastructure and land use conditions, conservation considerations and ecological features.

In April 2024, the UW students organized and led a publicly held community visioning meeting in Chimacum to gather input and insight from community members on how the Port may best proceed with use and operation of the property. This document, including the Farm Plan drafted by the FSC, is the final deliverable from the UW student team. It utilizes information obtained from community members, the Port of Port Townsend, and the Farm Steering Committee.

After June 7, 2024, the UW student team will disband in accordance with the University of Washington's Academic Calendar.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

*Agritourism* - Encompasses activities that attract visitors to the farm for affairs, education, or events.

Building Envelope - The dimensional area of land where constructing buildings is permitted by Jefferson Land Trust's 2016 Conservation Easement on the property.

*Farm Community Hub* - A farm that functions as a focal point for gatherings, events, and shared experiences.

*Economic Development* - Refers to the potential revenue generation, job creation, and benefits for the local economy.

Farm Steering Committee (FSC) - The commission of nine individuals chosen by the Port of Port Townsend tasked with providing guidance for future use of the farm property.

Initial Conditions Report (ICR) – Document prepared by the UW students to capture the conditions of the property at the beginning of collaboration between students and the Port of Port Townsend.

Mobile Slaughter Unit (MSU) - Transportable USDA-inspected slaughter unit that provides an option for small red meat and poultry producers to prepare their products to market without traveling long distances to reach a federally-approved slaughter facility.

*Regenerative Agriculture* - A farming framework which focuses on enhancing soil health, biodiversity, and overall ecosystem operation.

Sustainability - Refers to farming practices prioritizing environmental responsibility, resource conservation, and long-term viability.

Zoning Regulations - Local laws that dictate and restrict potential land use and development activities.

# Purpose of this Report

This report was prepared by ten Master of Urban Planning students from the University of Washington (UW Students), participating in a studio course through the program. The authors conducted research, held community meetings, and prepared the report over the course of sixteen weeks, from February to June 2024, during the Winter and Spring academic quarters.

The purpose of this report is to present the initial conditions report, community visioning outcomes, and potential farm uses research the UW students produced while supporting the Port of Port Townsend's Short's Farm development process. The report has been created with guidance from the Port Commission's Farm Steering Committee (FSC) and is intended to help the committee reach a decision on the future of Short's Farm. The FSC must determine future uses of Short's Farm that meet the Port of Port Townsend's key objectives.

During the first six weeks of engagement, the UW students compiled a comprehensive review of the initial conditions at the Short's Family Farm. The initial conditions report enabled the UW students to better understand the property and prepare for facilitating community visioning sessions after receiving feedback from the FSC and Port. In April, the UW students led a community visioning session in Chimacum in an effort to gather and incorporate the public's hopes and ideas for the future of the farm. Following the community visioning, the UW students worked with the FSC to evaluate potential uses and create a shared vision for the future of Short's Farm. They also conducted research on a number of topics that the FSC identified as relevant. The UW students' research was presented at two FSC meetings in May and used to inform possible future uses. These uses were evaluated and assisted the FSC in determining their goals and strategies for the Farm Plan.

This document summarizes the timeline of the UW students' engagement with the Short's Farm planning process from February to June 2024. Part One of the document includes a summary of the public engagement process that the UW students assisted with. Part Two includes the final Farm Plan and vision that the FSC drafted in collaboration with the Port & UW students. The appendix includes an initial conditions report on the farm, meeting materials from the FSC and public meetings that UW students created (including meeting summaries, presentation slides and handout materials shared during the meetings), as well as research including meat processing and farm case studies that was shared with the FSC.

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A. Initial Conditions Report
B. Complete Meeting Summaries + Materials

March 6, 2024
April 17, 2024
April 17, 2024
April 18, 2024
April 25, 2024
April 25, 2024
May 15, 2024
May 29, 2024
May 29, 2024

Case Study Research

USDA Meat Processing Facility
Farm Case Studies





# PARTONE Public Engagement Process

Led by the UW Students

## In Attendance

- All UW Students
- Katie Cote
- Port of Port Townsend Deputy Director Eric Toews, Executive Director Eron Berg, and Operations Manager Chris Sparks
- Rick Sepler
- Roger Short



Photo by Clelie Fielding

# Site Visit to Short's Family Farm

When: 12:30 pm, January 31, 2024 Where: Short's Family Farm

This site visit was the first and only time all 10 UW students toured the Short's Farm site. Adverse weather canceled the site visit's original date of January 17. Members of the Port of Port Townsend led the tour, providing information about the farm, its surroundings, and some of its history. This site visit allowed the UW students to explore the property in its current condition, and meet members of the Port.

## **Meeting Materials**

The UW students brought various maps of the property to assist with their understanding of the area. Maps had details on the property's zoning, hydrology, and existing infrastructure (including building envelopes). Students also took photos of the property to reference during ICR drafting.

## Main Takeaways

The site visit offered the UW students a look at the farm's current state and considerations for the upcoming Initial Conditions Report (ICR). Additionally, this was the first time the UW students and members of the Port of Port Townsend met in-person. Photos and notes taken from the visit would be very valuable for guiding the research and writing of the ICR. This meeting also set the group up for the FSC meeting in March.



Photo by Will Palmer



Photo by Greg Suskin



Photo by Clelie Fielding

# Initial Conditions Report Summary

<section-header>

ICR cover page



### w

Property map with wetlands overlay, via Jefferson County Public Land Records The Initial Conditions Report was prepared by the UW students. The authors conducted research and prepared the report over the course of six weeks, from February to March 2024, during Winter Quarter.

Following publication of the Initial Conditions Report on the Port website in mid-March 2024, the student team received feedback on the report from members of the FSC and incorporated their comments into the document in May 2024. The final document is available in the appendix of this report.

The report included three major areas of research, which are summarized below:

### **Conservation and Ecological Features**

Due to the nature and historical uses of the property, the environmental conditions on the property have changed since farming began in the area. There are critical area designations of both wetlands and salmon habitat on the property centered around Chimacum Creek. The constraint of seasonal flooding on the property creating the designated wetland may create a significant barrier to some agricultural uses. The report examines the historic Jefferson County Drainage District and community maintenance impact on Chimacum Creek, and notes the concurrent evaluation of reforming the Drainage District. The report outlines the environmental conditions on the property including the condition of Chimacum Creek as well as Naylor Creek, water quality, presence of wetlands, flood management, wildlife presence, reed canary grass, and soil conditions. The report also provides an overview of the legal documents and parameters relevant to the property, including a conservation easement for the property lots with allowed and restricted uses pertaining to the property, and two critical areas designations located on the property.

## Agriculture and Economic Context

The UW students researched the existing agriculture and economic elements of the property and surrounding area. Since the 1940's the farm has primarily been used to raise cattle for dairy and livestock purposes. In its current state, Short's Farm is limited in agricultural productivity by the seasonal flooding of Chimacum Creek. In the greater Chimacum and Triangle area, there are numerous farms growing produce, eggs and meat, as well as long standing agricultural institutions. The Chimacum Farmstand and community supported agriculture (CSA) orders are the primary ways farmers can sell their produce back to the larger northeast Olympic Peninsula community. The report also explores challenges to local agriculture and valueadded products. As part of the property's economic context, the section investigates tourism, fish and wildlife recreation, and economic development institutions active in Jefferson County.

### Infrastructure and Land Use

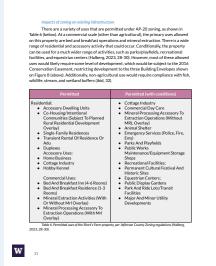
The report explores the current infrastructure and use of the property, and maintains that it is consistent with the Chimacum Valley's rural residential character. The property is served by adequate public utilities, and is generally outfitted in a manner that reflects self-sufficiency for water and sewage needs. The property contains a variety of buildings, some of which are in disrepair, which serve primarily agricultural storage or residential uses. Zoning and land use conditions proscribe a variety of potential uses on the property, but the main designation per zoning code for this land is agricultural. The property is beholden to a Conservation Easement held by the Jefferson Land Trust. The easement protects environmental and agricultural uses of the property, and restricts new building development to three distinct "building envelopes," limiting construction on the property in the future. The Short's Farm property's abundance of agricultural land, natural resources, and cultural significance provides many opportunities for economic development that aligns with the Comprehensive Plan. Targeted Industries relevant to Short's Farm include natural resources, value-added products, agriculture, tourism, and local and native arts. (2018 n. 7-4)

There are a number of other policies that may be applicable in the case of Short's Farm. Jefferson County's Comprehensive plan has policies seeking to encourage farming mentorships or apprenticeships, natural resource activities, agritoursin, value-added products, and public private partnerships. Table 4 (below) summarizes all of the encouraged activities in the commerships table 4 (below) summarizes all of the encouraged activities in the source-source partnerships.

| Encouraged activity  | Policy Number |
|--|---------------|
| Programs providing education, job training and retraining,<br>mentorships, apprenticeships and skill enhancement   | EDP. 2.4      |
| Businesses that: Pay living wages; Mitigate their impacts on public<br>infrastructure and the natural environment; Add value to natural<br>resources; Are environmentally sound; Expand the County's tax<br>base; Enrich the County's cultural and healthcare resources; and<br>Address the needs of an aging population | EDP 3.2       |
| Public-private cooperative partnerships  | EDP 4.1       |
| New sustainable natural resource-based activities in rural areas to<br>increase employment   | EDP 6.2       |
| Businesses that produce value-added products   | EDP 6.6       |
| Future innovative agriculture ventures and technologies  | EDP 6.7       |
| Agricultural tourism, eco-tourism, and native and cultural tourism   | EDP 8.1       |
| Small businesses, services, cultural attractions, and special events<br>to capture and support tourism   | EDP 8.3       |

**W** 2

Agricultural encouraged activities; Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan



Permitted uses in the zones of the site; Jefferson County Comprehenzive Plan

## Attendees

- All FSC Members
- All UW Students
- Katie Cote
- Port Staff: Eric Toews, Eron Berg, Joanna Sanders
- Community members

## **UW Student Roles**

Facilitator: Tony Charvoz

Lead Presenter: Malia Wing

**Conservation and Ecological** Features Presenter: Abby Newbold

Land Use and Infrastructure Presenter: Ben Hagen

Agriculture and Economic Context Presenter: Justin Patterson

Breakout Session Leads: Will Palmer, Will McPherson, Clelie Fielding

Notetakers: Greg Suskin, Aziz Alazzaz

# Farm Steering **Committee Meeting**

## When: 5:30 - 7:30 pm, March 6, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

This meeting introduced the Farm Steering Committee (FSC) to the team of 10 UW students for the first time. The purpose of this meeting was for the UW students to present the findings of their draft Initial Conditions Report (ICR), and run a breakout visioning session with the FSC to brainstorm strategies for the upcoming public visioning meeting on April 17. The FSC provided input for other areas of research, and asked further questions about specific elements of the ICR. There was no live public comment during the meeting.

## Meeting Materials

**Feedback Process** 

> Use the note cards provided at any

point throughout the evening

> Give your filled in note cards to a

> If you would like to be contacted

email address or phone number

member of the UW student team

regarding your feedback, provide an

UW students prepared a presentation slide-deck for the FSC and used this to present on the ICR, and establish the flow of the evening. Components of the ICR were boiled down to key takeaways for each of the three sections. For the breakout session, UW students used personal laptops and notepads to record relevant points to the discussions.

## Main Takeaways

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UW students gained valuable insight from the FSC regarding gaps and additional considerations in the draft ICR, as well as considerations for approaching the public visioning activity on April 17.

- Some FSC members shared valuable insights regarding the potential complications and conflicting priorities between salmon preservation, creek restoration, and the conservation easement broadly.
- UW students took the feedback to guide revisions for the next iteration of the ICR.
- FSC members went through the visioning activity and provided valuable insights for UW students on how best to run the public meeting, and what would resonate well with the community.

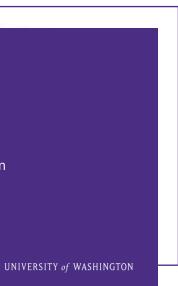
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

> Feedback Process

Agenda

- > Introductions
- > Expectation Setting
- > Existing Conditions of Short's Farm -Break-
- > What Is Visioning?
- > Visioning Goals and Methods
- > Visioning Meeting Group Activity
- > Closing and Thank You





## Attendees

- All UW Students
- Katie Cote
- Port of Port Townsend Staff: Eric Toews, Eron Berg, Joanna Sanders
- 40+ Community members
- FSC Members

## **UW Student Roles**

MC: Justin Patterson

Documenter: Greg Suskin

Greeters: Aziz Alazzaz, Ben Hagen

General Information Station Lead: Abby Newbold

Wildlife Station Lead: Tony Charvoz

Agriculture Station Lead: Will Palmer

Community + Economic Development Station Lead: Will McPherson

Creek Management Station Lead: Clelie Fielding

Floater/Idea Gatherer: Malia Wing

# **Community Visioning Open House**

## When: 5:30 - 7:30 pm, April 17, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

After the UW student team's creation and delivery of the Initial Conditions Report, the Port requested the UW student a visioning event to generate public input and ideas for future uses of Short's Farm. The Community Visioning Meeting was held as an open house where community members could drop in and provide input on a number of themes related to the Farm. The UW team worked to create materials and agenda for the meeting which provided the public at large an opportunity to:

a) learn more about the property,

b) understand the guiding framework for the project,

c) offer ideas and suggestions for specific uses on the Farm, and d) communicate community values.

The meeting successfully accomplished each of these aspects. Community members participated in documenting ideas with the UW team through a multi-step winnowing process to identify the top priorities. Attendees learned more detailed information about the property, and joined a reflective activity to highlight community values.

## AGRICULTURE



What has been grown on this property in the past? The property has been used as a farm since the 1880s, primarily operating as a dairy. It has also been used to raise beef cattle and for the retail production of topsoil.

What could be grown on this property in the future

The property's zoning, the conditions of the Conservation Easement, and the terms of the Port's acquisition allow for broad agricultural use Some examples of approved agricultural uses include: horticulture, viticulture (wine), floriculture, dairy, apiary, vegetable and animal

Are there any limitations to future agricultural activities on the

While the Conservation Easement and the Port's terms of acquisition encourage broad agricultural use, some uses may affect other priorities, such as wildlife conservation

Who in this community would most benefit from use of th farm

How could members of the agricultural community successfully share the property with each other and use it to meet their goals?

What are some of the best opportunities for future agricultural activity on the farm?

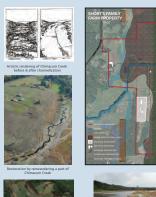
## **Meeting Materials**

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The UW student team created extensive materials for during and post-meeting use. During the meeting, the team provided a handout with general site information about Short's Farm, and a page about the Conservation Easement regulations on the property. The team created posters, and set up around the room at stations to share information and facilitate discussion. The UW students prepared a short slide deck on the visioning process that was presented in the middle of the meeting.

During the meeting, station leads each had blank poster boards to collect ideas about future uses of the farm. A final list of future use ideas was compiled in a full-group discussion. At the end of the meeting attendees were given two stickers to place on the final ideas posters to indicate preference. Members of the public were also given individual notecards for a reflection activity, which were collected during the meeting. Following the meeting, the UW students compiled summaries of the overall meeting, future use ideas and the rank preferences, and the reflection notecards.

## **CREEK MANAGEMENT**





health of the creeks?

18

#### What are the creeks on the property? One mile of Chimacum Creek (west branch) runs through the property towards Port Townsend Bay

property cowards Port 104msend Bay This portion of Chimacum was channelized (dredged and straightened) for agricultural purposes in the 1920s Naylor Creek feeds into Chimacum Creek on the property Both are observed salmon-bearing creeks and are designated as 'critical areas' in Jefferson County

- What are the current maintenance issues?
- The natural slope of Chimacum is very low, causing slow flow Reed canarygrass, a noxious weed, out-grows all other species along the buffers of Chimacum Creek, causing a slower flow of
- water and increased silting Perennial flooding of the creek creates a ripe environment fo reed canarygrass and other species, limiting farm land capac

#### What is the lefferson County Drainage District (ICDD)?

The JCDD was formed in 1919 for the purposes of maintaining waterways to protect properties from flooding
 The JCDD disolved in 1974 after commissioners left the board
 There is a movement for the JCDD to be reinstated, which is currently in a public engagement phase to create a plan for how the new JCDD will operate

#### What opportunities are there to improve the

### **Station Posters**

Agriculture and Creek Management were two of five station posters created for the meeting. Full page versions of these maps are available in Appendix B.ii.

## Community Visioning Open House

## Main Takeaways

The meeting successfully generated numerous ideas, suggestions, and values from the Chimacum community members who attended the meeting. The community members were active and engaged throughout the process. The most populat suggestions from the meeting are summarized below:

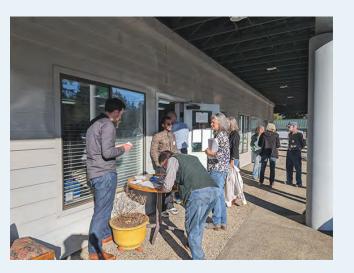
- Preserve and enhance agricultural opportunities
- Enhance the local food system
- Create a multifunctional hub and shared space for farmers and the broader community
- Improve and preserve environmental conditions

There was also spirited discussion regarding recreational opportunities on the Farm. No specific plans were identified during this meeting, but the community ideas and values were soon to be reported back to the project stakeholders in an effort to incorporate the public participation into the overall Farm Plan.

All photos by Greg Suskin















COMMUNITY & ECON DEV. CREEK NANAGENENT latole held consultant Eurison 1 Colomer Community Housing Agaittin Flow (desire) . Standards Condicts - commercial kilos - condicts - commercial kilos - cold strange - Form stand velay. Dut door . Classroom . lic Cert. Fvent Space



## Attendees

- All FSC Members
- Four UW Students
- Katie Cote
- Port of Port Townsend Staff
- Community members

# Farm Steering Committee Meeting

## When: 5:30 - 7:30 pm, April 18, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

Following the April 17th community visioning meeting, the FSC met on the evening of April 18th to follow up and discuss next steps. Representatives from the UW student team were invited to attend and briefly present their findings from the public meeting. The rest of the time was used for the FSC to continue discussion about potential uses of the farm. Ultimately, the FSC decided to hold an additional meeting for members to walk the property in person and begin to form both an operations plan and a long-term future plan for the property.

## Main Takeaways

The FSC was able to review the consolidated public feedback from the April 17th meeting. Following the meeting review, they identified a number of questions about the condition of the farm that needed to be answered prior to making concrete recommendations on future use. The main takeaways from the meeting are summarized below:

- Members of the FSC outlined several areas in which they felt additional information was needed. These topics included the soil types present on the land, the topography/elevation surrounding the creek, and the details surrounding the application of the Conservation Easement.
- The FSC and the Port determined that there may be a need for a sub-committee to focus on operations and maintenance for the property.
- The FSC decided to hold a meeting the following week (on April 25th) to walk around the property and begin outlining what agricultural uses would be possible. This would also be an opportunity to identify utilities and other infrastructure conditions that could impact the accessibility of the property and other operations.

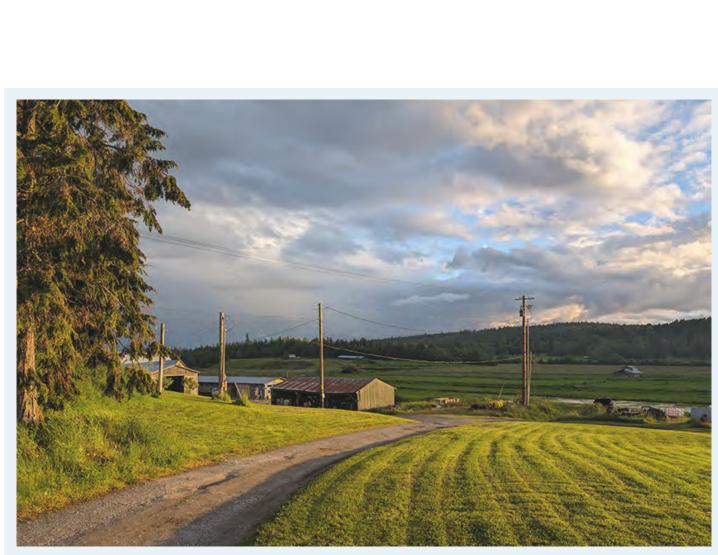


Photo of the Short's Farm at sunset by Greg Suskin

## Attendees

- All FSC Members
- Port of Port Townsend Staff
- UW Student representative: Justin Patterson

# Farm Steering **Committee Farm Tour**

## When: 6:00 pm, April 25, 2024 Where: Short's Famiy Farm

The farm walkaround provided the FSC an opportunity to look in more detail at the farm and its current condition to help determine future uses. There was also discussion at the end of the meeting about working on a future vision of the farm now that the conditions are mostly accounted for.

## **Meeting Materials**

• Martin Mills (FSC) brought a trailer with hay bales on the back for the group to drive around the farm. He also brought shovels and other tools to test the soil on the property.

## Main Takeaways

- FSC identified potential farm plots based on agricultural use, which resulted in the development of a "Potential Production Areas" map
- FSC indicated a desire to agree upon a vision for Short's Farm at the 5/15 FSC meeting
- FSC asked the UW students for more information on publicprivate farm partnerships and meat processing



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Selfie of the FSC in Martin Mill's tractor on the Short's Farm Property

# Consolidating the Community Visioning

A vision statement can act as a guide when deciding goals, policies, and actions. In urban planning, vision statements are written as the ideal state for the future use of a place.

During the class period that followed the public visioning meeting, the UW student team, led by Katie Cote, distilled ideas generated from the meeting to draft a vision statement. The goal was to represent the public opinion to guide future use of the property, within the frame of the Port's objectives.

The team started with the full list of ideas and opportunities generated at the meeting (a sample of which is to the left).

Then the items were grouped into similar goals and activites to consolidate the common themes (shown below).

#### WILDLIFE

AGRICULTURE

INSDA Meat Processing Facility

Growing Food to Quality Standards

Crops Willows, matting barley, wild rice

Preserving Neighbors' Organic Cert

COMMUNITY & ECON. DEV.

Farmer community Housing

-Dutdoor - Classroom -

Event Space

Shared Farm Space (Hub)

- compost - commercial kitchan - cold storage - Farm stand

Agricultural Education

Continued wate-towl hunting Balance recreation & conservation Birdwatching Opportunities Swan habitat Control floodplain for wildlife Fishing Opportunities Noise management Reduce hunting CREEK MANAGEMENT

Keminie Reed Canarygrass Mointain Flow (diedging) Longevity of Creek health (long-term solutions) Restore meander Salmon Health Appropriate buffer Zone for agriculture

#### Goals

| Birdwatching opportunities                |
|---|
| Cold storage                              |
| Commercial kitchen                        |
| Compost                                   |
| Continue waterfowl hunting                |
| Crops: willows, malting barley, wild rice |
| Energy generation (not-grid dependent)    |
| Event space                               |
| Farm stand                                |
| Farmer community housing                  |
| Fishing opportunities                     |
| Grazing opportunities                     |
| Outdoor classroom                         |
| Permaculture demonstration & education    |
| Regenerative agriculture (ie no-till)     |
| Remove reed canarygrass                   |
| Restore meander                           |
| Shared farm space (hub)                   |
| USDA meat processing facility             |
|   |

Activities

| Goals   |
|---|
| Agricultural education                          |
| Appropriate agricultural buffer zone for salmon |
| Balance recreation & conservation               |
| Beaver strategy                                 |
| Clean farming practices                         |
| Connecting producers & local needs              |
| Control floodplain for wildlife                 |
| Ecosystem management                            |
| Enhanced food resiliency                        |
| Growing food to quality standards               |
| Local supply network                            |
| Longevity of creek health (long-term solutions) |
| Maintain flow (dredging)                        |
| Maintain rural character                        |
| No net loss of agricultural land                |
| Noise management                                |
| Reduce hunting                                  |
| Salmon health                                   |
| Swan habitat                                    |

From these broad categories, the team developed the following statement for the Port of Port Townsend Vision for Short's Farm:

Short's Farm is a place that preserves agricultural opportunities for the farmers of Chimacum. Short's Farm will enhance the resilience of local food systems, support the community as a multifunctional hub for agriculture and recreational uses, and maintain a biodiverse and healthy ecosystem.

At the May 15, 2024 meeting, the FSC provided feedback on the vision statement, and this version was approved by the FSC as the following:

Short's Farm is a place that preserves agricultural opportunities for the farmers of Jefferson County. Short's Farm enhances the resilience of local food systems, supports the community as a multifunctional hub for agriculture, and maintains a biodiverse and healthy ecosystem.

From this vision statement, the Port staff developed their own vision statement that would serve as the vision for the Farm Plan Document. This version can be found in Part Two, Section II of this document (page 42)

provide environmental incubator serves develop stream infrastructure trees ecain restored land production hub space see hay chimacum providing meet home beer county hope viable help storage added areas farms sustainable maintain Creek slaughter needs products businesses wetland property wildlife need meat restoration years buffer outside support fish part used farm farming used value healthy food farmers local community livestock healthy facility food tarmland shorts small model along bird agricultural short couple birds facilities area on babitat birds facilities area ag habitat shared hunting include processing larger place thriving corridor products waterfowl productivo future freezer regional viewing accessible

Word cloud created from the postcard reflection activity at the Open House

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## **Precedent Research for** 8 **FSC** Discussion

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Following the April 25 visit to the property, the FSC recommended several next steps for the UW students to help guide the project. They requested information about precedent cases for potential future uses of the property, including meat processing as well as publicly owned and operated farms. The UW students researched the following topics. The corresponding full documents can be found in Appendix C.i.



### USDA Mobile Meat Processing

Meat slaughter and processing is an important piece of the food supply chain. The lack of slaughter and processing infrastructure was highlighted numerous times throughout the engagement process. Due to infrastructure and capacity constraints, a mobile slaughter unit which could operate on a part-time schedule was identified as the focus for research. The main takeaways of research into this is noted below.

- The main barrier to having a mobile slaughter unit (MSU) at Short's Farm is financial investment.
- A managing entity is needed for permitting, investments, grant applications, and day-to-day operations.
- Non-USDA inspected facilities, such as Retail-Exempt or Custom-Exempt butcher operations, may be easier to afford but limit sale options.
- There are numerous steps to ensure permit approval after an Operational Plan is determined.
- A USDA-inspected MSU would require an assumed processing capacity of ~84 head of cattle per month (1000/year), averaging 650 lbs, with a fee (all-inclusive) of \$240 per head to approach a break-even on initial investment, with a revenue target of \$240K in year 3.
- Total estimated upfront expenses for an MSU are \$628-803K.
- Important parts of the MSU USDA Grant of Inspection Application Process include: obtaining approved labels or brands, an approved water source letter, an approved sewage system letter, and a written hazard analysis and HACCP plan.

Photo credit: Friesla

## 

Further research to implement an MSU on the Short's Farm property may include:

- determining accurate regional capacity
- determining on site infrastructure capacity (mainly septic capacity)
- identifying potential infrastructure investments required for either Retail-Exempt or full MSU
- obtaining proper permits for either Retail-Exempt Butcher or Full USDA MSU
- reviewing and applying for grants and funding
- surveying regional farmers/ranchers to determine the best day(s) to operate
- creating operational and implementation plan

## Farm Case Studies

## Viva Farms

Viva Farms was established in 2009 as a Farm Business Incubator and Training Program. The organization operates 119 acres across three sites in Skagit and King Counties in Western Washington State, and currently hosts 29 incubator farms in a collaborative farming model. Plots used by the incubator farms range from 1/8 of an acre to 20 acres. Viva supports small farm incubator businesses by providing access to land, training, infrastructure, equipment, marketing, and other "Farming Essentials". The organization provides educational opportunities such as the Practicum in Sustainable Agriculture, Viva's flagship program. There are additional opportunities for participation in various workshops, events, and volunteer programs related to farming education.

This farm was selected as a case study due to the business model combining small business incubation with educational opportunities, two popular ideas arising from engagement with the public related to Short's Farm.

## Cuyahoga Valley National Park Countryside Initiative

The Countryside Initiative is a nonprofit 'cooperating partner' with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Northeast Ohio. Established in 1999, its early mission was to rehabilitate historic farmsteads in the area. Today, the Countryside Initiative includes ten working farms leased on National Park Service property, with ~300 acres of farmed area spread across roughly 20 miles. The organization has also expanded to offer educational programming, internships, and apprenticeship opportunities for beginner farmers in the area.

The Countryside Initiative was selected as a case study for comparison with Short's Farm because of its history of farmstead rehabilitation and its geographic and organizational connection with publicly owned (National Park Service) land.

## Intervale Farms

Intervale Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Burlington, Vermont. Intervale owns 360 acres of farmland that it leases out to seven small to medium-sized organic farms. It operates as a food hub, distributing crops from these farms through wholesale operations and a community-supported agriculture (CSA) program. In addition to land access programs, Intervale Center provides business planning, financial literacy training, and coaching services for farmers. It engages the community through events, recreation opportunities, and programs connecting refugees and immigrants to agricultural land. The organization generates revenue through donations, grants, program fees, rental income, and other operational activities. Its expenses cover staff salaries, grants to other organizations, and operational costs.

The case study suggests Intervale Center's structure could serve as a model for facilitating land access and supporting farmers at Short's Farm.



Drone image of Viva Farms; photo credit: Viva Farms



Countryside Farmers Market at Howe Meadow; photo credit: Cuyohoga Valley National Park Countryside Initiative



Sandy Bottom Farm, a tenant of the Intervale Center; photo credit: Scott Cherhoniak

## Bainbridge Island Public Farmland

The public farmland on Bainbridge Island is about 60 acres, and has 5 farms growing crops on lots ranging from 2 to 14 acres. The City of Bainbridge Island owns the property, and leases it at no cost to the nonprofit Friends of the Farms. The land is managed on a day-to-day basis by Friends of the Farms, which leases out land to farmers on primarily long-term leases. The property includes farmworker housing and growing fields, used primarily for crop production, and coordinates ith the Friends of the Farms to bring in school tours. There is also a public access walking trail through the property, as well as a farm stand for selling produce. Since 2019, the City of Bainbridge Island contributes \$65,000 annually to Friends of the Farms for nonprofit operating costs.

The Bainbridge Public Farmland is a compelling case study because it provides an example of how publicly-owned farmland may operate, specifically with a city-owned property leased to farmers for growing crops and maintaining the rural character of the area.





Constructed farm worker housing on Morales Farm a tenant of Friends of the Farm; photo credit: Nancy Treder

## Attendees

- All FSC Members
- All FSC Hembers
  Five UW Students
- Five Ow Stude
- Katie Cote
- Port of Port Townsend Staff

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• Community members

| Activities   | Goals   |
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Discussion: narrow Activities and Goals

Economic Development: Cold Storage Commercial Kitchen Compost Crops Farm Stand Dutdoor Classroom/Education Shared Farm Hub Pack Shed Equipment Rentay

Discussion: Port is 'Open for Business' for these potential economic activies on site

# Farm Steering Committee Meeting

## When: 5:30-7:30 pm, May 15, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

The meeting began with a quick recap of the Farm Tour that took place on Thursday, April 25th. During this time, Eric mentioned that the Port is taking the lead on developing an operations plan for the property so that it can continue in use on September 1st. This discussion also included the UW students presenting a map of potential agricultural uses on the property. The FSC provided feedback on the map for the students to use in creating a final version of the map.

## **Meeting Materials**

The UW students created a 'Potential Uses Map' of the property, which was printed for each member of the FSC (the title of this map was later changed to 'Potential Production Areas'). The students also created a poster with potential 'Activities' and 'Goals' for the FSC to discuss. In addition, the students prepared a slide deck and an initial draft of the 'Report on Community Visioning and Selected Research Issues' document.

## Main Takeaways

Through the discussion of the 'activities' and 'goals,' the FSC determined that several of the potential activities would be welcomed by the Port if there were individuals or organizations interested in pursuing those businesses. Some of these activities included cold storage, commercial kitchen, and equipment rental. It was also determined that activities such as waterfowl hunting and birdwatching are generally supported by the FSC - they will recommend that these activities continue. There were several activities and goals that were deemed either out of alignment with the Port's goals, or not feasible for this specific property. These activities included: specific crops, fishing opportunities, event space, and noise management.

Right: Potential Uses Map as of 06.06.2024





## Attendees

- FSC Members
- Five UW Students
- Katie Cote
- · Port of Port Townsend Staff
- Community members

# Farm Steering **Committee Meeting**

## When: 5:30-7:30 pm, May 29, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

After the FSC's discussion of a vision for the farm and potential future uses on 5/15, Eric Toews (Port of Port Townsend) consolidated the FSC's initial recommendations into a draft Farm Plan document, along with a list of short-term implementation activities. The 5/29 meeting was dedicated to the FSC's discussion of recommended changes to the Farm Plan and implementation activities. Time ran out before they could review the full document, so the 6/5 meeting will be dedicated to further FSC discussion of the Farm Plan.

## **Meeting Materials**

Prior to the meeting, Eric Toews consolidated the FSC's overall vision and goals into a formal "Farm Plan" document that outlines specific strategies for future uses of the farm. Eric also created a draft implementation plan that lists the near-term action items that will be necessary to make the farm available for use.

## Main Takaways

During the meeting, the FSC discussed the draft Farm Plan that Eric Toews shared earlier in the week. The entire meeting was dedicated to a line by line edit of the draft Farm Plan.

- The FSC had a number of recommendations for revising the document, making significant edits to the Challenges & Opportunities sections, and Goals 1, 3, & 4.
- Eric Toews is going to make red-lined changes to the draft Farm Plan based on feedback from the meeting and share with the FSC for the 6/5 meeting.
- The FSC will continue to discuss edits to the draft Farm Plan & address the draft Implementation Plan in the 6/5 meeting



Members of the FSC touring Short's Family Farm; photo by Port of Port Townsend Staff

## Attendees

- FSC Members
- Port of Port Townsend Staff
- Katie Cote
- Seven UW Students
- Community members

# Farm Steering Committee Meeting

## When: 5:30-7:30 pm, June 5, 2024 Where: WSU Extension Building

The main goals of the FSC meeting held on June 5th were to finalize the Draft Farm Plan and go over the new Implementation Matrix that had been created by Eric Toews. Since the FSC did not get through the full documents at the May 29th meeting, the goal was for the FSC to finish discussing these documents, apply any necessary edits, and come to a consensus on it.

### **Meeting Materials**

Eric Toews and the UW students took edits from the May 29th meeting to provide the FSC with an updated draft of the Farm Plan and Implementation Matrix. These updates reflected the discussion from this meeting and acted as a starting point for this meeting.

## Main Takeaways

Discussion primarily centered around which interested parties or advisory bodies should be included along with where the recreational activities should be included in the document's goals and strategies. There was additional discussion around the need for two different types of surveys to be done in the Chimacum/ Port Townsend community - one focused on the agricultural industry, and another looking more broadly at food systems and food resiliency. The FSC came to agreement on both the Farm Plan and the Implementation Matrix. The next steps would be for both documents to be presented to the Port Townsend Commission on July 10th, with members of the FSC present.



Group photo from 6/5/24 by Joanna Sanders Back left to right: Katie Cote, Tony Charvoz, Abby Newbold, Eric Toews, Ben Hagen Front left to right: Aziz Alazzaz, Clelie Fielding, Malia Wing, Will Palmer

# **PART TWO** The Farm Plan

Led by the Port of Port Townsend Approved by the Farm Steering Committee

Draft as of 05.30.24

# Introduction + Background



In the summer of 2023, the Port acquired the 253-acre Short's Family Farm in Chimacum, one of the largest contiguous agricultural land holdings in Jefferson County. The Commission authorized the purchase of the farm with the objective of developing and maintaining infrastructure and establishing uses of the property that will help sustain and expand agriculture in Jefferson County. Acquisition, re-development, and active use of the Short's Family Farm represents a rare opportunity for the Port to help to strengthen the agricultural sector of our economy and support the health of our local food system.

On September 27, 2023, the Commission adopted Resolution No. 797-24 to guide the development of a plan for the farm. The resolution outlined four planning objectives, a schedule for plan development, and established a committee of local experts (the Farm Steering Committee (FSC)) to help prepare a Farm Plan to guide future use and development of the property.

Photo by Clelie Fielding In late 2023, the Port contracted with the University of Washington's Department of Urban Design (UW) to employ master's degree students and faculty to assist the FSC and Port staff with the visioning process, community engagement, meeting facilitation, and to assist the FSC in preparing its recommendations for Commission consideration.

> FSC meetings were held regularly between January and June of 2024. Between January and March of 2024, the FSC's work focused on developing a common understanding of existing site conditions and identifying issues requiring additional information and research. In April and May, community and FSC meetings concentrated on developing a vision for future use and development of the property. All FSC meetings were conducted at the WSU Extension Offices in Hadlock, or on-site at the Short's Family Farm. The FSC's recommendations were presented to the Port Commission at a Public Workshop Meeting on July 10, 2024.



Photo by Will Palmer

# Plan Purpose + Vision for the Future

## PLAN PURPOSE

To help promote a thriving agricultural sector in Jefferson County.

## A VISION FOR THE FARM'S FUTURE

The Port's ownership and management of the Short's Family Farm has expanded agricultural opportunities for the farmers of Jefferson County, enhanced the resilience of the local food system, and improved fish and wildlife habitat along Chimacum and Naylor's Creeks. The ag-supporting infrastructure developed and maintained by the Port includes a multi-functional hub for processing, storing and distributing local ag products, and the property has been wisely stewarded to help nurture a new generation of farmers in our community.

## **KEY CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES** PRESENTED BY THE FARM

## Challenges:

- Ongoing need to manage reed canary grass, especially in the creek channel
- Site topography and channelized creek that contribute to flooding and poor salmon habitat
- Shortage of arable land better suited to grazing/pasture than crops/perennials
- Aging farm buildings and infrastructure in need of replacement, or rehabilitation, and ongoing maintenance
- Maintenance of the unfarmed areas of the property (i.e., unleased common areas)

## **Opportunities:**

- Advancing the Port's mission to support the community's economic health and vitality
- Collaborating to build community consensus for future use
- Leveraging Port capabilities to develop infrastructure that widely benefits farmers and grows Jefferson County's economy
- Forging partnerships with agencies, nonprofits and producers to address complex habitat restoration, land stewardship, and food system resilience challenges
- Providing farmers access to land for lease

## FOUR KEY PLAN GOALS

Consistent with the guidance provided by the Port Commission in Resolution No. 797-23, the Farm Steering Committee has recommended adoption of four key goals to guide the Port's future decision-making concerning the Short's Family Farm, as follows:

1. Support, Sustain & Expand Local Ag: Develop and manage the farm to tangibly benefit area farmers and support, sustain, and expand agricultural production, processing, and food system resilience in Jefferson County.

2. Restore Habitat: Undertake restoration efforts to improve habitat functions and values on site, especially for migratory fish.

3. Seek a Return on Port Investments: Whenever possible, advance uses and activities that achieve the Port's standard rate of a return on its directly invested dollars.

4. Buy Time for Further Research & Investigation: Establish a standing committee or specific ad hoc committees to assess the feasibility of the ideas and concepts outlined in this plan.





## Goal #1 - Support, Sustain & Expand Local Aq:

Develop and manage the farm to tangibly benefit area farmers and support, sustain, and expand agricultural production, processing, and food system resilience in Jefferson County.

Strategy 1.1: Seek funding to design, build and permit on-site infrastructure that provides wide benefits to Jefferson County farmers.

Goals, Strategies

+ Actions

• Investigate, and if feasible, fund and construct the infrastructure needed to periodically host a mobile slaughter unit (MSU) at the Short's Family Farm.

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- Research the potential to construct and license use of infrastructure that supports multiple users, for the processing, cold storage, and distribution of locally produced aq qoods.
- · Support equipment sharing and rental arrangements that increase farmers' access to the tools of the trade.

Strategy 1.2: Encourage continued active agricultural use of the farm for both grazing and growing arable crops.

- · Identify and delineate areas of the farm for specific uses, including:
  - Year-round pasture
  - Hay production/year-round pasture
  - Summer-only pasture
  - Arable crops and perennials
  - An area that could provide smaller parcels for growers that lack land
  - Seasonal Hunting
  - Public access for birding, walking and wildlife viewing
- In collaboration with agencies and community groups, continually apply adaptive management principles at the farm to attain the Port's goals of benefitting both agriculture and habitat, while achieving the Port's adopted rate of return.
- Investigate, and if feasible construct, vehicular farm access from West Valley Road.
- If feasible, extend irrigation to portions of the farm not supplied with water for arable crops and perennials.

Strategy 1.3: Ensure public access is sensitive to, and compatible with, agricultural activity.

Strategy 2.1: Immediately (i.e., July-September 2024) implement measures to manage invasive Reed Canary Grass to improve stream flow and reduce the extent of fall and winter flooding.

- Work with the Jefferson County Conservation District and other partners to mechanically remove Reed Canary Grass and other invasive species via rake and flail mower attachments from the main stem of Chimacum Creek.
- Develop, fund and implement an annual plan to manage Reed Canary Grass and other invasives on-site.
- Collaborate and coordinate with other landowners on the main stem of Chimacum Creek and the JCCD to encourage system-wide Reed Canary Grass management efforts.

Strategy 2.2: Replace the Naylor's Creek culvert on-site to improve fish passage.

• Identify and apply to grant funding for culvert replacement.

Strategy 2.3: In consultation with agencies, habitat and wetland specialists, and nonprofits (e.g., NOSC and Jefferson Land Trust), develop a Habitat Restoration Plan.

- Investigate and confirm the extent of historic agricultural activities to inform decisions concerning the geographic scope of future habitat restoration efforts.
- Develop improved topographic survey data to inform habitat restoration design.
- Research options to improve habitat for migratory fish.
- Coordinate with agencies, wetland and habitat specialists, and nonprofits to design a Habitat Restoration Plan capable of funding and implementation.
- Ensure that public access is sensitive to habitat functions.

Strategy 2.4: Support and encourage a range of compatible uses and activities, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Livestock grazing
- Growing arable crops and perennials (e.g. barley, blueberries, etc.)
- Orchards
- Agroforestry
- Paludiculture
- Seasonal waterfowl hunting
- Bird watching
- Pedestrian public footpaths

## Goal #2 - Restore Habitat

Undertake restoration efforts to improve habitat functions and values on site, especially for migratory fish.

# Goals, Strategies + Actions continued

Goal #3 - Seek a Return on Port **Investments**:

Seek a Return on Port Investments: Whenever possible, advance uses and activities that achieve the Port's standard rate of a return on its directly invested dollars.

Strategy 3.1: Ensure that licenses, leases, and capital investment decisions at the Short Farm employ a "triple bottom line" analysis to confirm that each is responsible economically, environmentally, and socially.

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Strategy 3.2: Aggressively seek grant funding for capital infrastructure improvement and habitat restoration efforts to minimize directly invested Port dollars and maximize the potential to achieve the Port's standard rate of return.

Strategy 3.3: Recognize that the Port's standard rate of return of 9.5% for the Short's Family Farm may not be achieved immediately but may require a period of years.

**Strategy 3.4:** Pursue short-term license and use agreements as a means to generate an immediate return on investment (e.g., hunting and birding access agreements with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)).



Strategy 4.1: Immediately (i.e., before September 1, 2024) develop an "Operations Plan" that documents the locations of key utilities and improvements on the Farm, and that outlines the day-today, month-to-month, and year-to-year activities that must be undertaken to ensure that the farm remains viable.

**Strategy 4.2:** Consider retaining a part-time/temporary farm caretaker to routinely inspect the property and oversee implementation of the Operations Plan.

Strategy 4.3: Create an Implementation Matrix outlining action items requiring further research and analysis to determine their feasibility (see Attachment "A", Implementation Actions). Ensure that the matrix identifies a timeline for completion of each item, its estimated rough order of magnitude cost, implementation leaders and partners, and measures of success. Priority implementation actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Negotiating and approving short-term lease agreements (e.g., 12-24 months) to ensure that the farm remains in active use while the longer-term use and development plans outlined in this Plan are advanced.
- Adopting an Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Manual for farm tenants and licensees.
- Developing evaluation criteria to fairly select lessees (i.e., an equitable land access strategy).

Strategy 4.4: Consider establishing the Farm Steering Committee as a regular standing committee to advance the work outlined in this Plan between July 2024, and December 2026. Alternatively, consider convening an ad hoc committee or committees to assist the Port in implementing this plan as needed.

Photo by Greg Suskin



Goal #4 - Buy Time for Further Research & Investigation:

Establish a standing committee or specific ad hoc committees to assess the feasibility of the ideas and concepts outlined in this plan.

# **APPENDIX** Complete Materials

Created by the UW Student Team





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