

CITY OF CHEHALIS

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September 10, 2007

Mr. Neil Amondson
The Kirkbride Group, Inc.
4405-7th Avenue S.E., Suite 301
Lacey, WA 98503

Dear Neil,

I am extremely pleased to respond to your request for information regarding a potential development at Chehalis Exit 77. First let me say, we are all excited at the prospect of both a quality lodging and food establishment at that exit. As the gateway to our central business district, it lacks those sorts of necessary amenities.

With three entrances into the city, Exit 77/Main Street is centrally located within the heart of the city emerging directly into the county courthouse complex, and the city's commercial areas to both the north and south, and city hall at Market Boulevard (the main street of the city). These areas would be, in many cases, within walking distance of the proposed development. Exit 77 is used by those doing business within the city, tourists (1-5, Hwy 6) and 'locals.' The last 20 years has seen significant residential growth west of the city.

This exit is a crossroads to and from access to Ocean Beach Hwy/Hwy 6 Scenic Byway, Willapa Hills Trail (Rails to Trails), and provides access to two of the city's most popular attractions: the Veterans Memorial Museum (veteransmuseum.org) and historic steam train rides (steamtrainride.com), access to the city's historic old town and government business district. It is the midway point between Seattle and Portland and only nine miles north from the county's other Scenic Byway, US Hwy 12 route to Eastern Washington.

Chehalis will soon be embarking on a citywide Chehalis Renaissance/Master Plan, which will move the city into a new era of planning and growth. The project will involve the public and businesses in a visioning process that considers visual impacts of the existing and future-built environment, transportation issues, landscape architecture, and design that welcomes and invites the public to the different commercial areas of the City, the visual character and differences of our historic residential neighborhoods and other neighborhoods, economic development strategies, and specific steps to promote and enhance the visual character and economic viability of the city.

The visioning, planning, design, and economic development process will incorporate the visual connectivity, historic nature and architectural design of the Chehalis 'Commons,' City Hall, the historic 'old town' and other current and future commercial areas. Additionally, a final document will include specific implementation strategies and steps. A new library will replace the existing library and city hall buildings. \$2,300,000 has

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been raised in private donations and grants for the new library, and plans are for it to be open in the spring of 2008. The library is the gateway to the city's 'old town' (coming from the south). This project is the cornerstone of the Chehalis Renaissance/Master Plan project.

There is a strong desire by the community leadership of Chehalis to preserve and maintain the city's rich heritage, while also providing for economic development and revitalization. Because of that, the city is presently funding a façade improvement program to help building owners within the city's historic downtown district upgrade their buildings.

Lastly, I feel it is of important to mention our streamline permitting process to anyone interested in developing in Chehalis. Neil, I am aware that you can attest to this. It is one of the areas that I believe makes Chehalis significantly unique and outstanding from many other cities or agencies. Through the city's Development Review Committee that meets weekly, we can 'fast track' the permitting process. The city's community development, public works, and fire departments work in concert to make sure our customers are provided the best possible service. In a recent independent study of permitting processes in our region, it was noted that the city of Chehalis' process "is designed for the success of the customer." The full report can be found on the Centralia/Chehalis Chamber of Commerce web site — www.centralia.com.

The proposed development at Exit 77 would be a welcomed addition to our community.

Sincerely,



Joanne Schwartz, Administrator
Office of Economic Development

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cc: Merlin MacReynold, City Manager