

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend. I'm Diane Walker with local news and commentary for Friday, March 29, 2024.

According to the *Kitsap Sun*, a motorcycle crash near the Kingston ferry terminal Thursday morning sent one man to the hospital. The driver of the motorcycle, a 21-year-old from Silverdale, was traveling westbound on Highway 104 around 11am on Thursday morning when he crossed the center line at Illinois Avenue and struck a curb along the opposite lane. The driver was thrown from the motorcycle. After medics arrived, he was flown to Harborview Medical Center for his injuries. Washington State Patrol reports the 21-year-old is suspected of driving under the influence at the time of the crash.

This week's *Port Townsend Leader* tells us that after nearly 20 years of planning, the first phase of Port Hadlock's \$35 million sewer project, which was completed in February, is now paving the way to help ease the area's affordable housing crisis and allow for more commercial growth. That first phase included site prep and earth work, installation of basic infrastructure such as power, water and fiber optic lines, low pressure sewer pipes and effluent pipes. Now that site work has been completed, construction has begun on the actual wastewater treatment plant, including administration buildings and other ancillary facilities. County officials estimate the plant will be completed in July 2025.

Once sewer construction is complete, the Port Hadlock Urban Growth Area will be able to support housing, medical facilities, higher density multifamily residences, senior housing, and commercial and industrial development. In particular, the completed sewer will make it possible for Habitat for Humanity, which owns 17 acres on Mason Street adjacent to the Jefferson County Library and Chimacum Creek Primary School, to significantly increase the number of homes planned for their Mason Street Project. "All housing will be affordable," said East Jefferson Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Jamie Maciejewski, "and no one will pay more than one third of their income for housing." Preliminary plans call for building duplexes, fourplexes and apartments, in addition to two group homes for developmentally challenged adults. Habitat staff anticipate selecting a final development plan in May. Construction is slated to begin in 2025, with the first homes ready for residents in 2027.

While the sewer project is widely supported by local elected officials and the area's civic leaders, many questions remain for residents of Port Hadlock and Irondale. Residents wonder when connections might occur, if they'll be forced to connect, and at what cost. Planners say more information will become available when the sewer ordinance is approved. A draft of the sewer ordinance, which provides regulations around parcel connection, sewer fees, and low-income allowances, will go before the County Commissioners in April or May of 2024 for review and approval. In the meantime, there is a dedicated webpage located on the Jefferson County website to answer questions (<https://jeffersoncountypublichealth.org/1158/Port-Hadlock-Wastewater-System>).

Construction will follow a phased plan, with service and connections beginning in Port Hadlock's commercial core along State Route 116 and Rhody Drive and then expanding into residential areas over time. Initially, the county plans to prepare all the necessary materials for connecting the first 100 or so properties to the system, without actually completing the connection until the system is operational. Such preparation is expected to start this summer for the highest water users, with connections likely occurring the summer of 2025.

And finally: if by some chance you might be hoping for an Easter Egg Hunt this weekend, we know of two. The first, which happens at the Jefferson County rec center at 11am on Saturday (tomorrow), is a fundraiser for the Port Townsend Cooperative Playschool. Children from 0 to 5 and their siblings are welcome, and there are non-candy eggs with a chance to trade prizes for books. The second is put on by the Elks Lodge and will happen at 8am at Chetzemoka Park on Sunday, with a pancake brunch to follow at the lodge at 11.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Monday through Friday at noon and 5pm and at noon on Saturday. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening and enjoy your weekend.