

This is KPTZ 91.9 FM in Port Townsend, Washington. I'm Diane Walker, with your local news and commentary for Thursday, November 20, 2025.

This week the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners has approved \$1.46 million in funding for affordable and homeless housing in 2026. A total of 13 projects from eight housing and shelter providers will be awarded from two county funds: \$1.3 million from the county's affordable housing fund, and \$160,000 from its homeless housing fund. Fund recipients included the Winter Welcoming Center, Gateway to Freedom's Victory Villa, Dove House Advocacy Services, OWL 360, Habitat for Humanity, Bayside Housing and Services, OlyCAP, and Olympic Housing Trust.

The Olympic Housing Trust reports that construction has begun on Dundee Hill Community Homes, a new affordable housing development in Port Townsend at the corner of Hastings Avenue and Hendricks Street. Constructed with green building practices, the Dundee Hill project will offer five town homes available for purchase to residents of Jefferson and Clallam County. The 2 two-bedroom and 3 three-bedroom homes are designed for residents who earn a local income but have been priced out of Port Townsend's competitive housing market.

Washington's Senator Maria Cantwell has sent a letter to the administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) expressing her concerns about NOAA's decision to cancel an approximately \$300,000 grant for the Alaska Earthquake Center (AEC). Lacking those funds, the AEC will stop providing real-time seismic data for timely and accurate tsunami warnings for the entire west coast after November. Asking that NOAA restore the seismic information needed for Tsunami alerts, Cantwell stated that, "On Washington's coast, a tsunami generated by the Cascadia Subduction Zone could hit communities in 15-30 minutes. Any potential delays in life saving information puts our communities at risk."

The Port Townsend *Leader* has announced that new sidewalks will soon be poured along Washington and Walker Streets outside the Jefferson County Courthouse, bringing ADA-compliant sidewalks from Penny Saver up the side of Washington Street and then across the street to Walker and along Courthouse Park to the Courthouse. Partially funded by a grant from the state's Transportation Improvement Board, the work is scheduled to begin in December and wrap up in February, with no more than a few temporary road closures.

The remainder of the funding is split nearly equally between the city's Transportation Benefit District fund and real estate excise tax revenues. The project includes 670 feet of new sidewalk, an ADA-compliant driveway at Port Townsend Inn, pavement patches at the crosswalks to meet ADA slope requirements, and an additional sidewalk extension along Courthouse Park, parallel to Washington Street, to create ADA access for a new Jefferson Transit bus stop on the corner of Washington and Walker. That stop will replace the current sidewalk-free stop at Washington and Cass.

The City has also announced plans to initiate street and stormwater improvements at the intersection of Mill and Discovery, where a highly deteriorated street surface currently tends to flood during rainy periods. This \$315,000 project will reshape the roadway, add ditches, and install stormwater drainage so that surface water is properly managed.

For those in Port Ludlow who may find themselves needing wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, bath seats, or other medical equipment, ECHHO is re-opening the Care Closet at the Port Ludlow Community Church. ECHHO – the Ecumenical Christian Helping Hands Organization – loans out medical equipment for as long as you need it, for free, and if you need something that is not currently in their Port Ludlow inventory, they will try to have volunteers bring equipment down from their main office in Port Townsend. If you need access to these supplies, simply email info@echhojc.org and ECHHO volunteers will be in contact with you to arrange a meet up.

And finally, Washington State Parks has announced it will offer limited lodging accommodations at Fort Worden for three select weeks through the end of the year:

- Thanksgiving week, November 21 to 30
- Christmas week, December 19 to 28 and
- New Year's week, December 28 to January 4.

To reserve space during those weeks, visit <https://parks.wa.gov/fort-worden-vacation-rentals> or call (888) 226-7688.

KPTZ 91.9 FM broadcasts your local news Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at noon and 5pm. You can contact us at news@kptz.org. I'm Diane Walker. Thank you for listening.