



# Press Release

## City of Edmonds

Mayor David O. Earling

**For Immediate Release: April 9, 2013**

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### ***Port of Edmonds Withdraws Land Use Application for Harbor Square Master Plan***

**(Edmonds – WA)** – The Port of Edmonds formally notified the City of Edmonds that it is withdrawing its Land Use Application to have the City adopt the Port's Harbor Square Master Plan as a Comprehensive Plan Amendment or Sub Area Plan. Two letters, submitted to the City, cited three primary reasons for withdrawing the application, i.e., lack of *“sufficient support to obtain a majority [Council] vote for acceptance of the Planning Board recommendation to approve, with conditions, the proposed Harbor Square Master Plan Comprehensive Plan Amendment”*; the Council stopping *“consideration of the Port’s proposed Master Plan, and instead, crafting its own sub-area plan under the auspices of the Port’s Harbor Square Master Plan Application”*; and the *“City Council’s inability to substantively review the Planning Board’s recommended decision approving, with conditions, the adoption of the Harbor Square Master Plan Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Council’s failure to consider the City Staff’s recommendation that the Council similarly adopt that Planning Board recommendation.”*

*“I am disappointed the Port of Edmonds chose to withdraw their application”* stated Mayor Dave Earling. *“The City Council’s attempt at re-drafting of the Port’s plan, which helped trigger the withdrawal, results in zero benefit to the City, Port or community; specifically, zero near term economic benefit and zero environmental enhancements to the Edmonds Marsh. As cited within one of the Port of Edmonds’ letters, I hope that the Port of Edmonds stands ready to work with the City to achieve a true partnership and discuss the future of Harbor Square and that this process has not jeopardized the City and Port working as partners.”*

The Port of Edmonds states it understands that the City Council is the decision maker with respect to the Comprehensive Plan and it recognizes that although the City Council has the *“ultimate prerogative to accept the Planning Board’s and the City Staff’s recommendations”*, it’s *“reticence to do so left the Port with only one*

*realistic recourse....” This being said, the Commission believes it was “acting not only in the best interest of its constituents, but also in the City’s interest by creating opportunities for future beneficial development....”*

The Port of Edmonds expressed their sincere thanks to Planning Department Staff for the significant time and energy expended in focusing on the substantive issue related to the proposed Master Plan and the thoughtful evaluation and deliberation undertaken by the Planning Board in reaching its recommendation on the Port’s application. While the Port Commission states it *“stands ready to work with the City to achieve a true partnership and to discuss the future of Harbor Square,”* it also states that the *“City Council needs to accept, that the Port of Edmonds is a separate legal entity, an independent public enterprise with a parallel mandate to the City of Edmonds and Town of Woodway, for economic development.”*

The Port of Edmonds closes one letter by stating it *“takes this opportunity to re-state that the fundamental driving premise of future development at Harbor Square is that it must be economically feasible enough to attract private sector investment participation, while also including the many public amenities the Port’s Harbor Square Master Plan proposes. The Port of Edmonds is not a general purpose government and has statutory limitations on the use to which it can put its property and a fiduciary obligation to generate a full market return from its investment.”*

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