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Photo by Buddy Rose / Business to Business

Port of Centralia Executive Director Amy Graber provided an update on new businesses coming to Centralia Station during the Revitalization Roundtable.

Roundtable highlights Centralia Station news

By Buddy Rose
Business to Business

Centralia business leaders gathered at Dick's Brewing in Centralia on Sept. 28 for the final Revitalization Roundtable of 2026. The event was hosted by the Centralia Downtown Association and Economic Alliance of Lewis County. It featured a detailed update on the Port of Centralia's Centralia Station development project.

Economic Alliance Executive Director Todd Chaput introduced Amy Graber, the new Executive Director at the Port of Centralia, who took over the helm there in July of this year after serving as interim director following the resignation of former executive director Kyle Heaton last year.

Graber announced Chick-fil-A is expected to begin construction at Centralia Station, across Art Lehman Drive from WinCo, later this year. A Valvoline store may be added to the development site for Chick-fil-A in the future, she said. Also, the large development site that includes the existing WinCo store has a number of smaller retail pads where businesses, such as Chipotle, could locate, she added. Another major retailer coming to Centralia Station is Wilco, said Graber. The farm store has purchased a four-acre site adjacent to Long Road, she explained.

Vanessa Herzog, representing the commercial real estate firm, Lee and Associates, provided information about marketing strategies to help bring business into the area. Her firm is partnering with the Port, the City of Centralia and the Alliance. She said many developers are looking for finished pads where potential businesses could be located. An anchor tenant, such as WinCo, is matched with area demographics to help find those businesses. Placer AI software can be used to help identify businesses that match available users.

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Tobey named executive director of Centralia College Foundation

Experience Chehalis announces search for her replacement

By Susan DeLaire
Business to Business

In a heartfelt letter to Experience Chehalis partners dated Sept. 30, Annalee Tobey announced her resignation from the organization, one of over 40 Main Street associations in the state of Washington. Tobey will be stepping into a new role as Executive Director of the Centralia College Foundation and Vice President of Advancement, effective Oct. 1. Tobey was appointed to Centralia College's Board of Trustees in June 2022.



Annalee Tobey

Tobey initially started in a volunteer role in 2010 with the organization formerly known as the Chehalis Community Renaissance Team, as it was called prior to rebranding as Experience Chehalis. In her letter, Tobey writes the volunteer position "grew into an incredible opportunity to serve this very special Chehalis community." Tobey served as the group's first executive director for nine years.

Experience Chehalis announced its search for a new executive director on Oct. 1 and named Experience Chehalis Outreach Coordinator Angie Guy as the Interim Executive Director. At the group's Friday with Friends hybrid meeting on Oct. 9, Promotion Committee Chair David James confirmed the news.

Experience Chehalis has never been about one person or one organization, Tobey wrote. "Its strength comes from the many people who care deeply about Chehalis and choose to invest their time, talents, energy and hearts into making it the special place it is."

"Together, our ideas have become traditions, projects have moved us forward, and our community continues to evolve and thrive. I am incredibly proud of what we have accomplished, and I am so grateful for the very important relationships I have made along the way," she states.

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Fernseed Centralia set to open in October

By Susan DeLaire
Business to Business

The Fernseed, a popular plant and flower shop in Tacoma, is branching out. A new location, Fernseed Centralia, is set to open in late October, in the former Pioneer West Garden Center location on North Pearl Street. According to posts on social media, the store's grand opening is scheduled for Nov. 7 and 8, however the store was expected to open on Oct. 26.

Owner Katherine Raz opened the Tacoma store on Proctor in April 2019, and moved to its South Tacoma Way location in 2020. The boutique flower shop and floral studio sells indoor plants, handmade pottery, cut flowers and offers delivery in the greater Tacoma area. The shop specializes in pet-safe bouquets and "thrive on neglect" houseplants and outdoor nursery products,

(See "Fernseed" on Page 2)



Photo by Jeremy Fink / Business to Business

Fernseed Centralia, 710 N. Pearl St., will hold its grand opening on Nov. 7 and 8.