

# Data center: Will be start of 'something big'

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"One of my first investors, a retired mutual fund manager, ... said she was doing it for the love of Oregon and the Oregon Coast, but also for the social impact we'll have on education and the chance to bring young minds into technology (careers)."

Already Cox has formed partnerships with the Port of Astoria, Clatsop Community College, Clatsop County and the city of Warrenton.

The estimated \$200 million project would be developed in three phases and will break ground later this year.

For local officials, it's the start of something big.

"The creation of a data center would present the opportunity for the college to develop curriculum and programming that would give our students another pathway to success," said Chris Breitmeyer, Clatsop College president.

"A successful data center technician's certificate could be a one-year program that would allow students to make a family-wage salary. I believe the national average salary for these folks is above \$60,000."

Jim Knight, executive director of the Port of Astoria, called it one of the biggest things to happen in the county in a long time.

"It's an incredible opportunity in that it will radically give us the capacity to have a significant increase in internet speed ... and it increases redundancy," he said, the lack of which caused problems in the 2007 storm.

"The average wage for those working there is about double the average wage for Clatsop County," Knight added. "It will increase jobs, the tax base, the wage base. I haven't found a downside yet."



An artist's rendering of how the North Coast Data and Technology Center might look.

Cox grew up in Westport and Astoria and attended Clatskanie High School.

He studied computer technology at Clatsop Community College, a program no longer offered there, and graduated from the University of Oregon with bachelor's degrees in both marketing and finance.

He co-founded one of the country's first 200 nationwide internet service providers in 1997, Global Frontiers Inc. In 2004, he founded Web Hosting Pros, which he still runs.

"I'm real excited about the opportunity to bring computer technology back to the area," Cox said. "There's so much to offer people and young families here. ... One thing I've really come to appreciate is how beautiful it is."

There are many tech companies in greater Los Angeles, but the region doesn't offer the amenities of Clatsop County, with its rivers, forests, lakes, oceans, affordable housing and 17.2-minute average commute time.

Also, Oregon is the nation's leader in linking undersea Internet cables with the rest of the country. There are 17 such cables off Oregon.

"They're projecting over 22 billion devices will be online by the end of 2022," Cox said. "That's a tremendous opportunity not just for my company, but all companies involved in this industry. And it's important for this county."

An estimated 600 zettabytes will be generated by all people, machines and things by 2020, he pointed out. One zettabyte is equal to 1 trillion gigabytes and 1 gigabyte equals 1,024 megabytes.

"To wrap people's heads around that, if all cell phones had 64 gigabytes of storage, 600 zettabytes would allow for every human on the planet to have nearly 1,400 cell phones each."

Having the support of local leaders is important, too. On Aug. 6, the county commission was unanimous in its decision to sell the 67-acre industrial-zoned parcel to Cox's company, Agile Design LLC, for \$1.2 million.

There will be challenges: funding, weather, education, housing.

"I'm fearless," Cox said. "I am mindful of the challenges, but I'm the kind of person that likes to rise up and meet challenges."

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## Miss Clatsop gears up for new season

The Miss Clatsop County Scholarship Program seeks young people interested in becoming the next Miss Clatsop County, Miss North Coast, Miss Clatsop County's Outstanding Teen or Miss North Coast's Outstanding Teen.

Females age 13 to 24 are asked to visit the organization's Facebook page or website to download application. Contestants must reside, attend school or work in Clatsop, Tillamook or Columbia counties.

Miss Clatsop County Scholarship Program is a nonprofit corporation established to provide contestants with the opportunity to enhance professional and education goals, and achieve those pursuits with the assistance of monetary grants and awards.

The program is an official preliminary competition for the Miss Oregon pageant, which is part of the Miss

America Organization.

In 2018, Miss Clatsop County made \$7,000 in scholarships available to local women.

The Miss Clatsop County pageant is Jan. 26, 2019, at Seaside Convention Center.

Contestants are judged in interview, talent, physical fitness, evening wear and an on-stage question. Deadline to enter is Dec. 1. Winners move on to represent our area at the Miss Oregon pageant in June 2019.

In addition to the Miss and Teen divisions, the Miss Clatsop supports a princess program to mentor girls ages 6 to 12.

For younger participants, the emphasis is on citizenship, leadership and volunteerism. A \$75 participation fee is requested for those participating in the princess program.

Miss Clatsop County Scholarship Program is run by volunteers.



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