

# Port proposed for Sunshine Coast

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An Abbotsford-based developer wants to ride the anticipated wave in ocean freight traffic on the Pacific Rim by building a world-class port on the Sunshine Coast.

Columbia National Investments Ltd. proposes to build an international ocean port at McNabb Valley on the Sunshine Coast, its CEO Steve Dunton announced last recently.

The site of the proposed port is about five kilometres up Howe Sound from Port Mellon and historically was used for industry. CNI purchased 803 acres there, with 1.5 km of deep-water front, with water depths going to 229 metres [750 feet], the company reports.

"This port facility is much needed," said Dunton.

"It is common knowledge that B.C. ports do not have the capacity necessary to keep up with international demand."

Dunton cited forecasts by industry experts such as Capt. Gord Houston, president and CEO of the Vancouver Port Authority, that Vancouver could soon be in a crisis because traffic is expected to increase 300 per cent, mostly as a result of more demand from China.

He said building a port facility at McNabb Valley would be a positive step in increasing B.C.'s market share in Asia-Pacific trade.

"Our proposal is to build a world-class port facility that will not only help to meet the growing international

demand, but will also provide an excellent, high quality job base for both the Sunshine Coast and the Squamish area," said Dunton, who owns and manages CNI with his brother Herb.

Dunton said CNI is eager to work with federal and provincial governments as well as with the Sunshine Coast Regional District to turn the proposal into a reality.

Plans include building the infrastructure necessary to connect the facility with existing rail lines and roads. Dunton says CNI is in discussion with several potential partners on this project, including international and local port operators.

Columbia National purchased 3,286 acres at three different locations on the Sunshine Coast, with plans that include a resort-style residential development.

In Abbotsford, CNI is working on three ambitious projects. The residential development of 46-hectare [114-acre] Falconridge on the south slope of Sumas Mountain has 90 homes built and another 145 homes and up to 120 condos to come.

In central Abbotsford, CNI is preparing to begin work on a 943-unit, seven-building residential and commercial complex on Gladwin Road.

On the southeastern side of Sumas Mountain, CNI proposes to build an entire \$1-billion, Smart Growth community of 2,200 residential units, 2.2 million square feet of commercial and office space, 14 hectares of green space, and possibly a convention centre.

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