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The Quiet Township Of Hoquiam Evaluates The Past And Takes To The Water

The evolution of a town is always a delicate act, as much art as commerce. A town that has been established for one reason may find the need to explore other options as times change, which inevitably, of course, they do. But the way a town changes is a thing well worth paying attention to, because it says a lot about the changes in our culture at large.

Look at the town of Hoquiam, Washington; it's a town going through changes. Established as a logging town, it maintains that history with events such as the Loggers' Playday. On top of that, there's a logging competition and accompanying parade every fall. So while it's important to preserve and celebrate a town's past, it's also necessary, sometimes, to invent new traditions.

Consider the waterfront. This stretch of city in the downtown has been underused since its previous heyday in the 1980s. Now that some development has taken an interest in it, there's a possibility for it to become a much more colorful and vital part of the local community. It can't be all logging contests and lumber festivals, after all.

There's space on the waterfront for hotels and shops, the kind of commerce that makes a town a city -- or at least a bigger town. A good waterfront area has done much for other cities, notably San Antonio and Baltimore. It creates a kind of city center with room for dining and shopping and entertainment. And of course there's a natural feature that serves as built-in scenery, something to sit by while sipping drinks or having a bit of dinner.

The town has a good, and good-natured reason, to revitalize its waterfront. It has a bit of a rivalry with its neighbor and sister city Aberdeen, the larger town to its east. Often bigger cities get more tourism, more tax money, more opportunities, than the smaller neighbor nearby. Kind of like the older sibling who gets the new clothes and leaves the hand-me-downs for the younger kid. If Hoquiam could get organized and turn its downtown into a beautiful and usable waterfront district, it would have a good chance at showing its big brother next door what a real town is like.

That balance between tradition and innovation is an important one. But it's necessary to think about making change to avoid stagnation in a community. And when small towns such as Hoquiam find this opportunity for evolution, they should take a chance or two and grow.

Find out additionally about [Wade Entezar](#).

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