

2019 AAPA Communications Awards

Entry Classification: Web-based media category

Title: Port of Tacoma Centennial Story Map

SUMMARY

The year 2018 marked the Port of Tacoma's (Port's) centennial. One hundred years ago, the leaders of Tacoma had a vision-to create a publicly owned port that would bring more ships, cargoes and jobs to our community. On November 5, 1918, Pierce County citizens cast their vote to officially create the Port of Tacoma.

Our centennial year was a time for our commission and our community to look to the future and decide how we want to shape it, but also to reflect on the Port's innovation, partnerships and connection to the community that has contributed to the area's economic growth.

The Port created an interactive web application (or story map) that linked narrative, photos, videos and maps to engage and educate the community about the Port's 100-year history. The [Centennial Story Map](#) describes some of the major Port, regional and global milestones that have helped shape Pierce County, Washington and our world over the last century.

To view the Port of Tacoma's Centennial Story Map, navigate here <https://arcg.is/1jOfXD> or refer to the *Centennial Story Map Links* section for images and links to example pages.

CHALLENGES OR OPPORTUNITIES

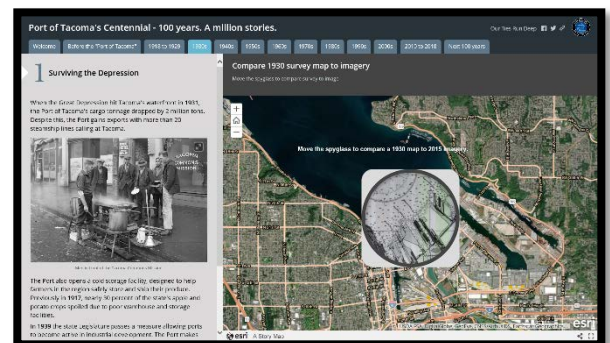
Our approach was creative and cost-effective

Our challenge was how to creatively convey and summarize 100 years of history to the community in a fun and unique way. A story map was a perfect way to integrate all the historical information (photos, videos, etc.) information, and interactive maps into an easily shareable online platform.

The story map incorporated photos and videos as well as several interactive maps to engage the user. For example, in the 1930s, the user can compare a 1930 survey map to current imagery to see how



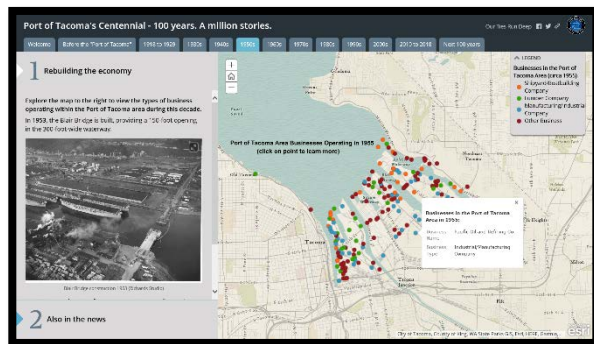
Centennial story map's main landing page



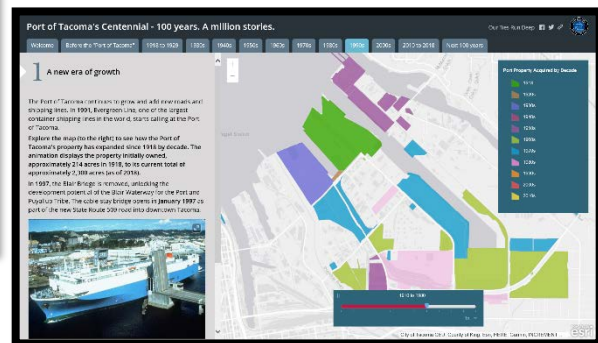
Map example: Users can view changes by using a spy glass to compare 1930 survey to current imagery

much the Port has changed. In the 1950s, the user can see all the businesses operating the Port around 1955. In the 1990s, an animation over time shows the property the Port acquired by decade.

All maps within the story map are interactive. The user can click on the map data displayed and get additional information (e.g., a business name) or select an area of the Port to explore further.



Map example: Businesses operating in the Port circa 1955



Map example: Animation of port property acquired by decade

The story map is organized by decade so the user can navigate directly to a time period of interest, or step through the Port's last 100 years sequentially. This allows the user the ability to create their own unique experience and spend as much or as little time as they want exploring.

The story map was created with our internal staff (two-person, Geographic Information System (GIS) Group), with our existing technology and without a budget. In fact, it was the GIS staff that approached the Communication Department with the offer to create the Centennial Story Map. We also had never created and shared a story map for public viewing. This was truly an opportunity to try something new.

The GIS Group and Port's Communication Department worked closely together to refine the content and message to ensure it fit within the overall centennial campaign. We leveraged existing content (photos, videos, etc.) that was already being shared through other media platforms, so we did not have to recreate content for the story map. This made the process extremely efficient and consistent with other Port centennial campaign efforts.

Notable items included:

- The story map was created using internal staff so additional funds were not needed.

- The story map was created using existing technology. Since new technology was not purchased, ongoing maintenance and support beyond our internal staff is not needed.
- The story map is now a known tool we can utilize at the Port to communicate within the organization and throughout the community and to the world.

PORT OF TACOMA'S MISSION

Our approach complemented both the Port's mission and the centennial's objectives

Our overall mission is to “Deliver prosperity by connecting customers, cargo and community with the world.” The Centennial Story Map emphasizes the time and effort spent on this mission over the last 100 years. The story map details our relationship to the environment and Puyallup Tribe, businesses who operated in the Port, our expansion over time and our cargo statistics, just to name a few items.

Port staff also worked closely with the five-member Port Commission to develop five key goals for the Port's centennial effort. These goals guided the development of the various elements of the entire centennial effort. Here are the goals and how the story map supports them:

1. Celebrate the Port's past achievements and highlight our future opportunities and challenges.
 - *The story map highlights the Port's past achievements through photos, videos, facts and maps.*
2. Increase our community's understanding and appreciation of the Port's historical milestones, evolution, current operations and future plans.
 - *The story map provides an easy and unique way for our community to interact with Port's history through photos, facts and maps. The user can choose to explore historic events by a specific decade or view the information sequentially.*
3. Strengthen our Port's existing community partnerships and create new ones.
 - *The story map highlights community partnerships such as the Puyallup Tribe which are so important to working effectively in this region.*
4. Highlight the many ways the Port creates jobs and economic vitality throughout our region (historically and currently).
 - *The story map details economic growth and decline and how the Port's continued innovation helps maintain its role as an economic engine for our region.*

5. Create a unique legacy project that gives the Port of Tacoma lasting visibility and connections with future generations in our community.

- *The story map is a dynamic, informational tool we can not only use today to detail our proud history, but also continue to refine and build upon into the future.*

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

Our approach to collaborate with the Port's Communication Department ensured the story map was consistent and aligned with the Port's centennial message

Our objective was to create an interactive experience for the organization, our business partners and the community to learn and engage with the Port's 100-year history.

ACTIONS AND OUTPUTS

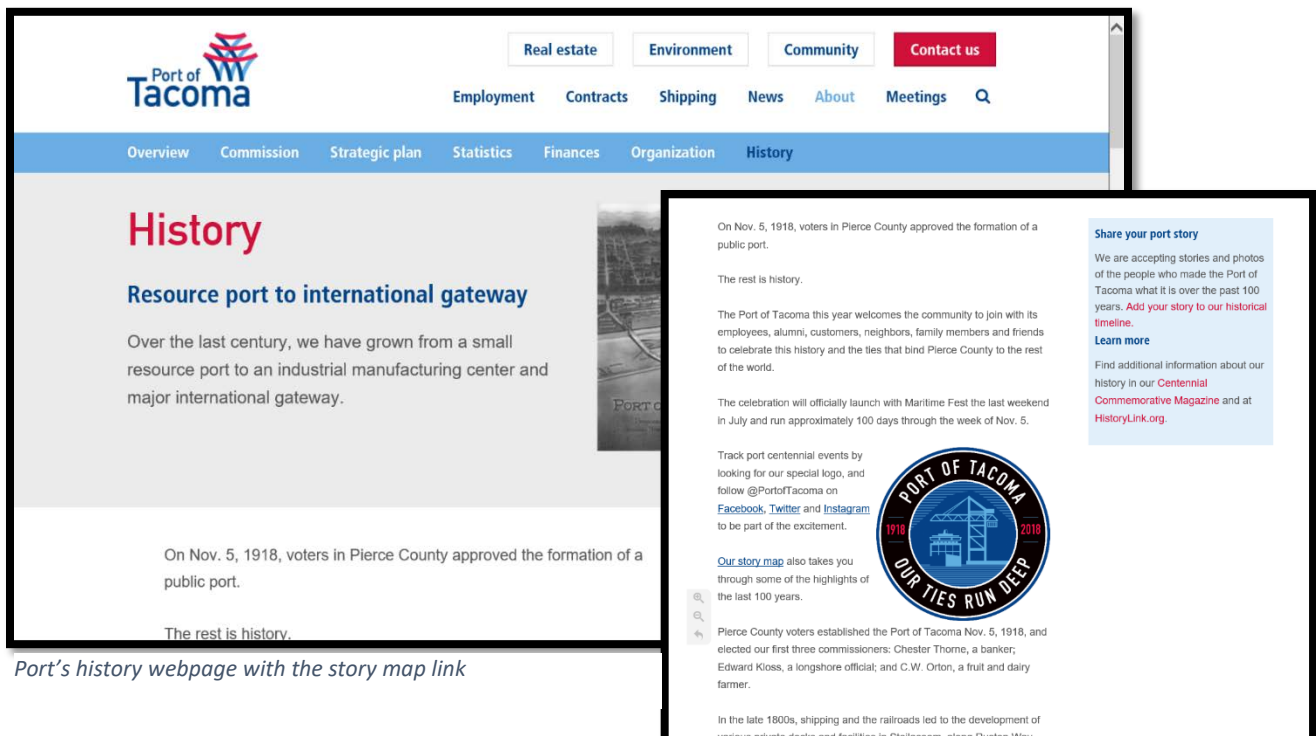
Our actions provided a new, interactive way for the Port to share information with the community and organization

We shared the story map through many media channels including, the Port's Facebook and Twitter accounts, the Port's website, internal communication and regional GIS conference.

Port of Tacoma's History Webpage:

The Port created a public facing webpage to provide highlights of the Port's history. The Centennial Story map link was included on the page.

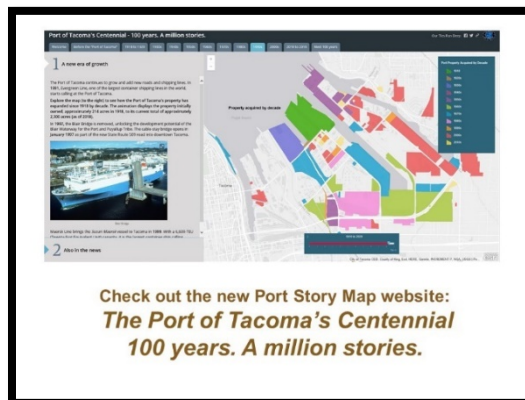
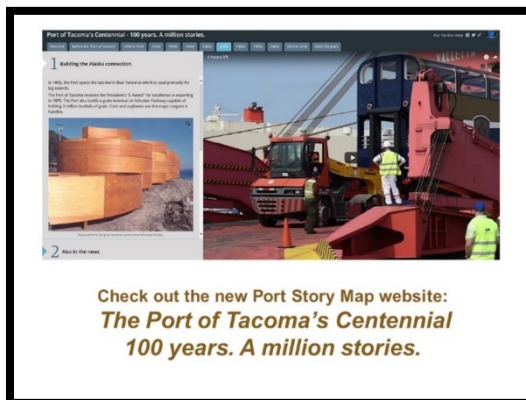
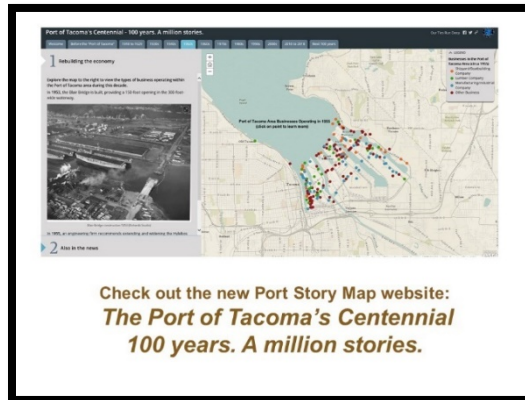
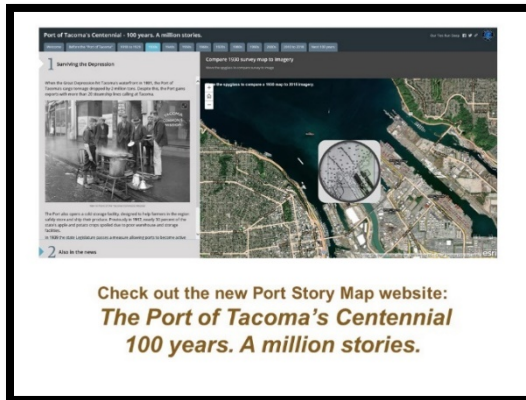
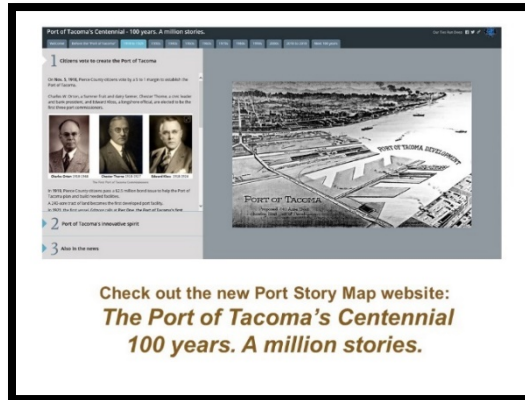
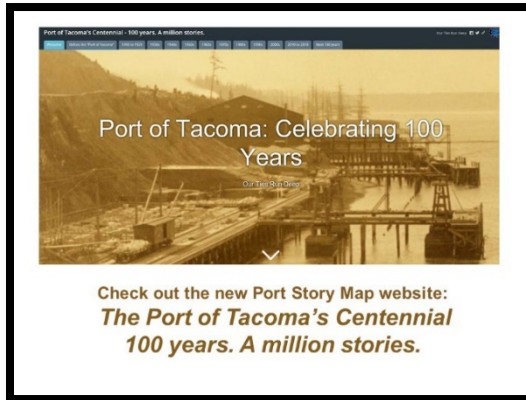
<https://www.portoftacoma.com/100>



Port's history webpage with the story map link

Port News Network (PNN):

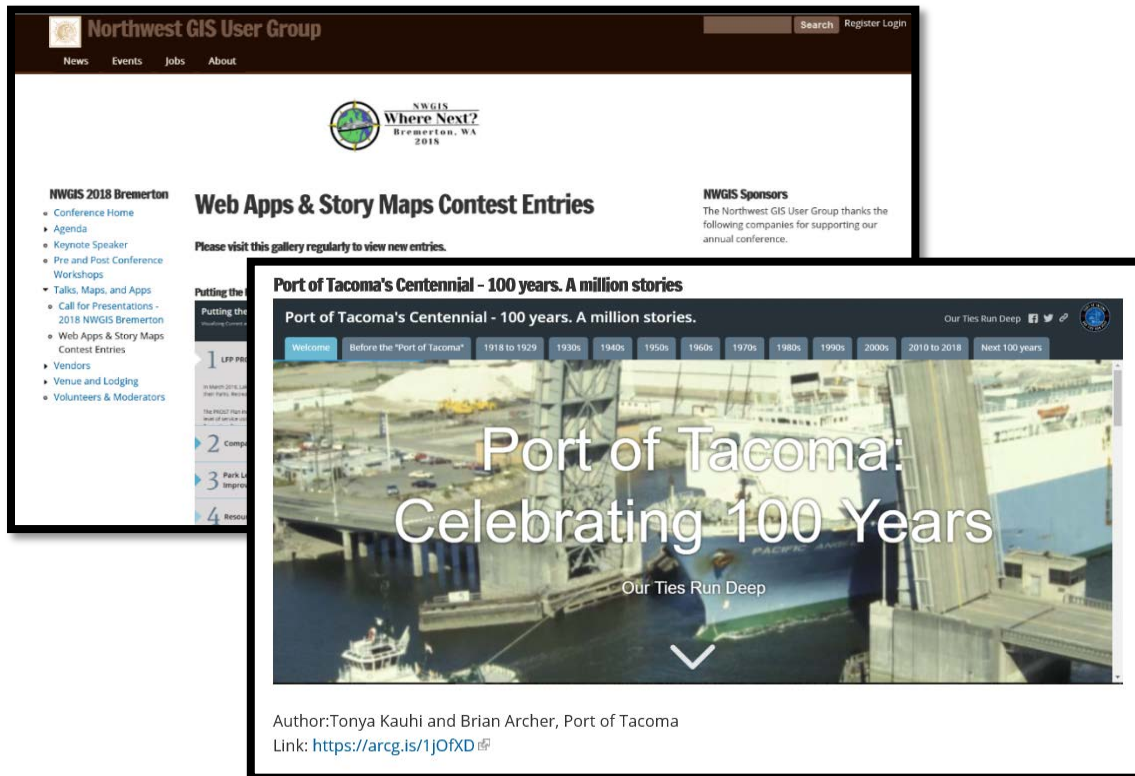
Port News Network (PNN) is the one of the ways the Port's shares information with staff about upcoming and past events. Event information is displayed on large screens throughout the Port's administration, maintenance, security and customer service buildings. Several of the story map's individual pages were highlighted throughout the weeks of our centennial celebration to promote the story map with Port staff.



Examples of slides circulated on the Port's PNN

Regional GIS Conference:

As another way to spread the word about our Centennial Story Map, it was also entered in the Story Map contest at the Northwest GIS User Group (NWGIS). The NWGIS conference is a conference for GIS professionals to learn geospatial technologies, share information and network. Since the story map is built with GIS software and utilizes multiple types of media and maps, we thought it would be well received at this conference. During the three-day conference, the story map was viewed about 100 times. <https://nwgis.org/2018/web-apps-story-maps-contest-entries>



NWGIS conference webpage with the Centennial Story Map entry

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

Our approach provided a new, interactive way for the Port to share information with the community and organization about the centennial celebration

Web Analytics:

Since this was our first time sharing information publicly using this technology, we did not have advanced metrics available for the story map, however, since its official launch on Nov. 5th, 2018 (the Port's 100th anniversary date), the Centennial Story Map has received over 450 views. Over 250 of the views were during the month of November 2018, when it launched. In the future, we would like to be able to measure many more metrics including, time spent on each page and if the viewer is new or a repeat user.

Top 3 most visited pages are:

1. The page that highlighted the time period from **1918-1929**
2. The page that highlighted the events in the **1930s**
3. The page that highlighted events related to **Before the “Port of Tacoma”**

Top 3 most viewed maps are:

1. The map that showed **Port Property Acquisition by Decade** through a time slider animation (1990s page).
2. The map that showed the **Business in the Port of Tacoma Area** in circa 1955 (1950s page).
3. The map that showed **Port Property Acquisition** in 1960 verses property acquired between 1910 and 1950 (1960s page).

User Feedback:

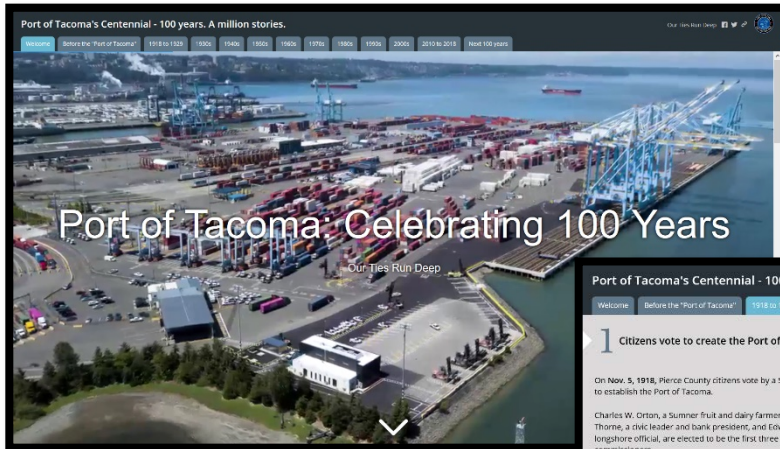
Here is unsolicited feedback we received in response to the Centennial Story Map.

Tim Puryear, Northwest Building Corporation, said “He—and members of his staff—lost about an hour of productivity at the office yesterday because they were spending so much time exploring the content of the story map.” Mr. Puryear was complimentary of the site, how much information it contained, and he said it was clear that somebody spent a ton of time putting it all together.

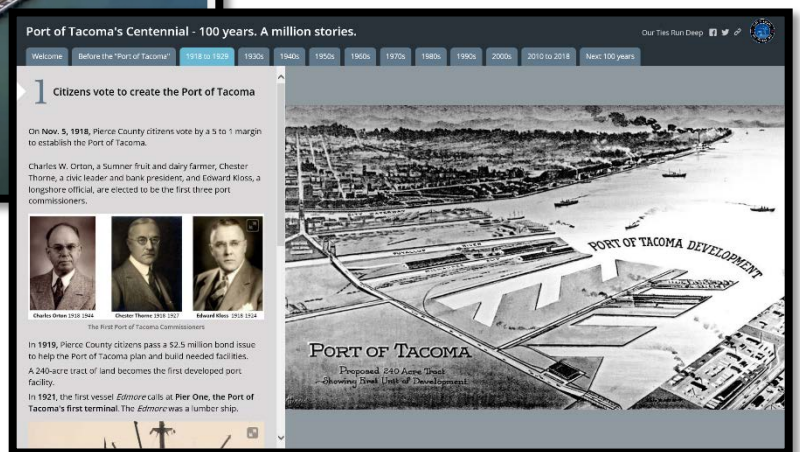
Jim Hogan, PSE, responding to reviewing the story map “This is great! I’ve already lost 20 minutes of my day in the blink of an eye! I’m going to have to book a couple of hours to really explore this site. ... “I have spent hours and hours researching the history of our job site and in 20 minutes on your web site I already learned something new. ...This is really great stuff. I love history.”

CENTENNIAL STORY MAP LINKS

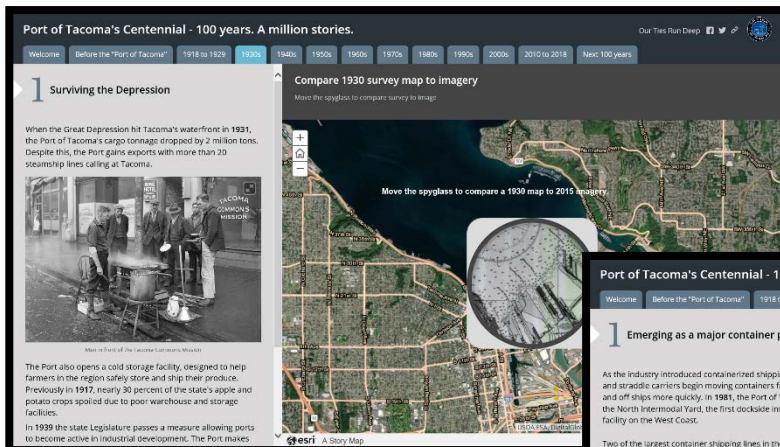
This section includes some example screenshots and link to the story map. To view the entire Port's Centennial Story Map live, navigate here <https://arcg.is/1jOfXD>, or click on the images below to explore select individual pages. These pages demonstrate the capabilities and diversity of functionality available within the story map.



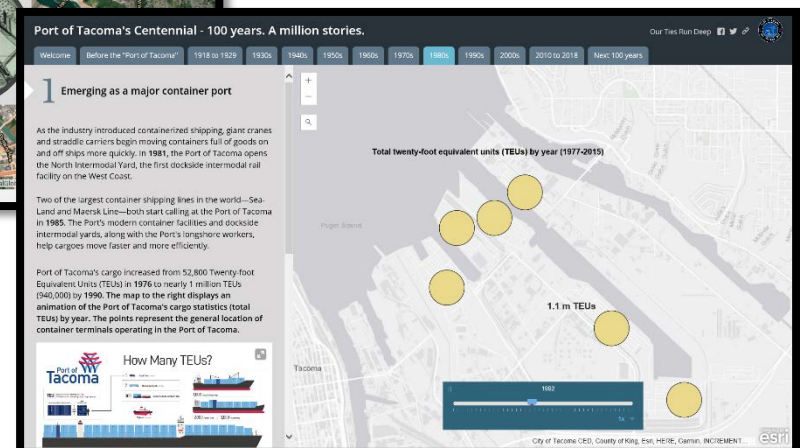
Centennial story map's landing page



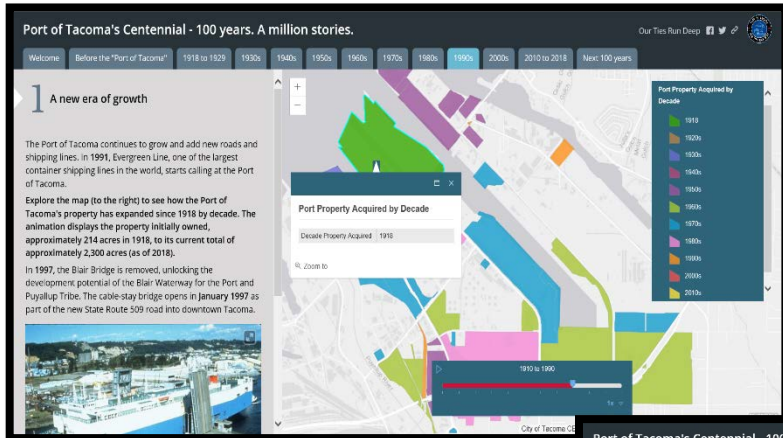
Centennial story map's 1918 to 1929 page



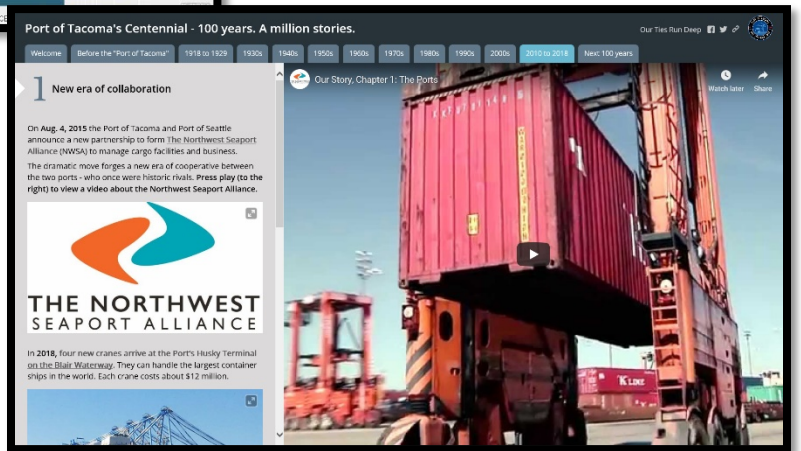
Centennial story map's 1930s page



Centennial story map's 1980s page



Centennial story map's Next 1990s page



Centennial story map's 2000-2018 page