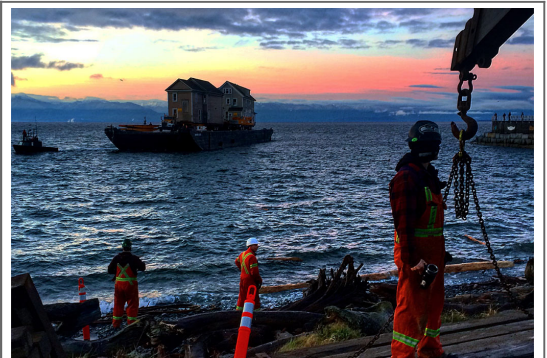




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## [Developer's answer to dearth of housing in Port Townsend: Bring 'em in on a barge](#)

<b>Reference #:</b>	
<b>Price:</b>	\$
<b>Square Footage:</b>	sqft



## Features

PORT TOWNSEND — Aiming to bring affordable homes to Port Townsend, a local developer chose to bring in recycled homes on a barge, a strategy that was meant to cut construction costs and get the houses on the market faster.

“We’re a small company, so we really only have a few options when it comes to making things affordable,” said Joe Johnson of Johnson Family Properties NW, a company he and his wife, Katie, founded in 2014.

“You can build cheap, which is bad for the homeowner and not something we want to do, or you do something like this.”

The Johnsons, who now live in Port Townsend after residing in Seattle and Bainbridge Island, are bringing four homes into town. They will be placed on four lots in Port Townsend near 21st and Sheridan streets.

Three homes were brought in from Victoria by barge Tuesday night and moved through town Wednesday and Thursday. The fourth home will coming in from Mount Vernon on Wednesday.

Johnson said he hopes to have the homes on the market in December and plans to

price them in the \$230,000 to \$300,000 range — lower than the average price of homes in Port Townsend, which is currently hovering around \$395,000.

“It’s hard to call them affordable because affordability is relative,” Johnson said.

“We just wanted to bring in houses we could sell on the lower end of the spectrum in Port Townsend. Prices here are really expensive, especially considering the labor force we have here.”

Johnson said recycling houses means the company is paying less on construction costs and working on a much faster timeline.

“That’s less interest we have to pay on loans and obviously less construction cost,” Johnson said. “As far as cost effectiveness goes, it really balances out.”

Johnson said all the houses will get new foundations, updated interiors and be rewired up to code. All the homes are roughly 1,000 square feet with two bedrooms and one bath.

Two of the homes will be provided with basements, which will add some square footage and living space.

Johnson said he’s seen a lot of support for neighbors of the new development, even though one of the houses on a truck blocked the end of 21st Street for several hours Thursday afternoon.

“It’s hard to say sitting in the middle of all this now, but the noise impact from construction is minimized since the houses are already done,” Johnson said, “and everyone has just been really accommodating.

“I think everyone in Port Townsend realized there’s a need for housing here.”

Adequate housing for residents of all income groups, including sufficient housing affordable for low- and moderate-income groups, is among the goals of revisions to the city’s 2016-36 Comprehensive Plan, although rentals are the major concern.

Johnson found the homes through Everett-based Nickel Bros. Structural Movers. Johnson said Nickel Bros. works to recycle homes that are scheduled for demolition and then helps move them to a new location.

Johnson began looking for homes through Nickel Bros. and went to Victoria to see

the houses before they were moved.

"They're cute houses," Johnson said. "Most came from nice neighborhoods in Victoria with an owner that just wanted an upgrade."

Nickel Bros. handled all the moving of the homes — from the barge that anchored in Port Townsend Bay to the trucks that drove them through town.

"As far as the barges and everything went, they dealt with all that," Johnson said. "I just had to let the city know and get permits."

Article Author Cydney McFarland

Article	Source	URL
		<a href="http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/news/developers-answer-to-dearth-of-housing-in-port-townsend-bring-em-in-on-a-barge/">http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/news/developers-answer-to-dearth-of-housing-in-port-townsend-bring-em-in-on-a-barge/</a>

See the listing online at <https://www.nickelbros.com/residential/developers-answer-to-dearth-of-housing-in-port-townsend-bring-em-in-on-a-barge/>.

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*Price includes house with local delivery and lowering onto foundation. Prices may vary based on final location, site accessibility, utility line work involved and/or barging requirements.*