

DATE: April 18, 2022
TO: Commissioners Keller and Meyer
FROM: Leslie Barstow
CC: Port of Tacoma Commission, Eric Johnson, Sean Eagan, Judi Doremus
SUBJECT: Potential alternatives for Port investment in workforce development

A. BRIEFING

This memo is intended to brief the Workforce Development Committee on potential alternatives for Port of Tacoma investment in workforce development. Staff seeks guidance from the Committee at your April 18 meeting as to which concepts they would like staff to further refine for both their— and the full Commission’s— eventual consideration; we would also welcome your suggestions of other alternatives we should consider. While no formal action is request of the full Commission, staff always welcomes input from all five commissioners.

B. BACKGROUND

The Workforce Development Committee—with visibility by the full Commission—directed staff in May 2021 to focus the Port’s workforce development strategy on well-paying jobs that do not require a four-year college degree. Fields of interest would include: the building trades, the manufacturing trades and transportation and logistics trades. The Committee also approved a roadmap for developing the Port’s workforce development strategy.

The first step of that roadmap involved a survey of employer needs, which was completed in the autumn of 2021. The second step of the roadmap was an inventory of existing workforce development programs in Pierce County, completed in March.

C. POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES OF PORT INVESTMENT

This list entails high level concepts for potential Port of Tacoma investments. Further analysis (including legal review, refined cost estimates and specifics) will clearly be needed before the Committee can settle on a recommendation to the full Commission. Staff’s hope, however, is that this general overview will allow the Committee to provide guidance on which alternatives it would like us to focus on. Please also note that many of these ideas are scalable, allowing the Port to invest more or less than recommended.

Staff has sought to group these ideas into three main categories: major, medium and minor investments. Moreover, each category is further divided into sub-categories of industry awareness/recruitment and skills development.

While the Port can do as much or as little as Commissioners wish, staff recommends that Commissioners consider limiting the number of significant new initiatives during the first year. Specifically, we might suggest one major investment, one or two medium investments and then additional minor investments as needed. In future years, the Port could certainly take on additional initiatives as it becomes more experienced in this line of work. Please note that staff has identified some existing programs that entail significant financial costs as “minor” as they are investments that can be maintained with relatively little trouble.

1. MAJOR INVESTMENTS

a. Industry Awareness/Recruitment Alternatives

i. **Contract with Workforce Central for a high school recruiter (\$50K-\$100K/year)**

Contract with Workforce Central to hire a high school recruiter to promote career opportunities in the building, logistics and manufacturing trades, steering students to existing apprenticeship programs. This position would be similar to college and military recruiters, with the goal of building relationships with high school counselors and regularly visiting high schools. Pending legal review, the Port could put an emphasis on recruiting underrepresented populations. Ideally, the Port would seek to split the costs with other funders—such as the Associated General Contractors and the Pierce County Building Trades Union.

Measure of success: Number of touches

b. Skills Development Alternatives

i. **Contract with Workforce Central (or other group) to increase number of internships or paid work experience training opportunities (\$100K/year)**

Workforce Central currently coordinates paid work experience and internship program opportunities for Pierce County residents. Wages for these internships and work experience programs are subsidized and/or reimbursed by Workforce Central. WFC facilitates worksite agreements and supports recruitment and placement into these roles. Jobseekers in the program gain occupational and industry knowledge while building their resume and gaining valuable experience. The contract would focus on the building, logistics and manufacturing trades. Pending legal review, the Port could put an emphasis on opportunities for underrepresented populations.

Workforce Central estimates that they could provide an additional 14 robust, full-time 40 hour per week paid internships positions in Pierce County with an additional \$100K/year from the Port. Conversely, it could train 16-20 workers in manufacturing, construction or commercial driving with \$100K/year; through matching dollars, they could boost this to 32-40 workers. This dollar amount is scalable.

Alternatively, the Port could hold a competitive solicitation for a multi-year contract (three to five years, for example) to provide internship services similar to what is outlined above. Workforce Central could compete, but so too could other entities.

Measure of success: Number of interns/paid work experiences/workers trained

ii. **Establish a Workforce Development Fund (\$250K/year)**

Modeled after the Local Economic Development Investment Fund, the Port could hold a regular call for projects for workforce development initiatives focused on the building, logistics and manufacturing trades. The call for projects would occur once a year. The Port could award funds to multiple entities per cycle. Eligible applicants could include non-profits, public community or technical colleges or

local governments. Pending legal review, the Port could put an emphasis on opportunities for underrepresented populations. This dollar amount is scalable.

Measure of success: TBD

iii. Develop a CDL training center (\$1.2M to \$6M)

Acquire property for technical colleges to lease for students participating in their CDL training program to practice. Costs assume a 2 acre site.

Measure of success: Acquisition of property and number of students who use the site.

iv. Re-establish Port's state certified apprenticeship program (\$387K/year+)

The Port could re-establish its state certified apprenticeship program, following the approach discussed by the Workforce Development Committee with Michael Dehner from Human Resources and the Department of Labor and Industries.

The estimated cost above would provide for two apprentices and does not consider the decreased productivity of the existing workforce which would need to provide supervision of apprentices while they work. It also does not consider escalating labor costs that could result if vacancies do not develop in Maintenance and the overall headcount grows to account for the new apprentices that graduate from the program.

Measure of success: Number of apprentices that graduate from the program

2. MEDIUM INVESTMENTS

a. Industry Awareness/Recruitment Alternatives

i. Invest in Hire Pierce County Job Fair (\$10K-\$25K/year) **

This annual job fair held at the Puyallup Fair Grounds showcases career opportunities in the trades and attracts 3,200 high school students every year and features 200 employers/vendors. The Port has been a regular sponsor of the event (\$1K/year) and has hosted an interactive booth at the event. Staff proposes increasing Port investment into this event. Event organizers often struggle to secure funding. A \$10K sponsorship would be more in-line with the other major funders and would provide greater funding stability for the overall event, allowing event organizers to focus less on fund raising and more on programming. A \$25K sponsorship might provide the Port with naming rights. If the Port were a larger investor, it would also work to recruit other employers to participate. This dollar amount is scalable.

Measure of success: Number of "touches"

ii. Refresh and update Teacher/Home Schooling Resource Handbook and Gateway to the World reading book (\$15,000) **

The Port has developed tools to introduce elementary school students to the concepts of trade and economics, along with how Port activities impact their community. Designed with the Tacoma School District, the elementary school program is tailored for third grade students but has been successfully used in second and fourth grade classrooms. The mix-and-match elements make it easy to integrate the curriculum into lessons. The in-class activities and worksheets

** Current Port initiatives that could be expanded.

found in the teacher resource handbook can be used individually or along with the Port's third grade reading book, Gateway to the World.

The existing materials are dated and could be refreshed with current branding, updated statistics and more current imagery. Would require an outside Graphic Designer. Printing costs would be extra depending on quantity.

Measure of success: Number of materials distributed

iii. Increase Port participation in school career fairs (\$10,500) **

Currently, Port staff participate in one or two school career fairs per year. Staff proposes increasing this number to 8-12 fairs per year. This will be accomplished through the use of the new Community Affairs Specialist position as well as at least one representative from Maintenance. It is worth noting that Maintenance employees' hours are non-billable and run an estimated \$174/hour and typically are only available during regular business hours. They are also pulled off of their normal work to participate.

Measure of success: Number of fairs.

iv. Develop social media content for career opportunities in the trades (Within existing resources-\$15,000 for five videos)

Develop videos or other social media content highlighting career opportunities in the trades, with an emphasis of showcasing underrepresented populations. To do more than 2 short videos a year, outside production would need to be hired at a cost of \$5,000 per video.

Measure of success: Number of views, shares, reactions

b. Skills Development Alternatives

i. Increase investment in Tacoma Public Schools Certification Program (\$30,000/year) **

This certification program is offered during the summer break in collaboration with the City of Tacoma. Tacoma Schools is also developing a Maritime Skills Center to have year-round similar opportunities for students. Students in this course will earn the following credentials: OSHA 10 (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), United States Coast Guard: Merchant Marine Credential (MMC), and Transportation Security Administration (TSA): Transportation Workers Identification Card (TWIC), Warehouse Forklift, Vessel Personnel w/Designated Security Duties (VPDSD). This program is offered at no cost to TPS students, and students are connected with potential employer partners.

The current program is capped at 75 students per year. The Port of Tacoma could cover the costs of additional students at an estimated rate of \$1,000 per student per year. An annual investment of 30,000/year would fund an additional 30 certifications per year. Please note, this would be limited only to students living in the Tacoma School District.

Measure of success: Number of participants completing program.

3. MINOR INVESTMENTS

a. Industry Awareness/Recruitment Alternatives

i. Promote Teacher/Home Schooling Resource Handbook and Gateway to the World reading book (Within existing resources/de minimis) *

As noted above, the Port has developed tools to introduce elementary school students to the concepts of trade and economics, along with how Port activities impact their community. The Port continues to have surplus materials. Staff could begin a more aggressive outreach campaign to Pierce County educators letting them know about these resources.

Measure of success: Number of materials distributed

ii. Host annual Tideflats career fair (Within existing resources/de minimis)

Coordinate with Workforce Development Board and other Tideflats employers to host a career fair. Not only could Human Resources promote jobs at the Port, but so too could other Tideflats employers.

Measure of success: Number of touches

iii. Partner with Washington Alliance for Better Schools (Within existing resources)

The Alliance is a collaborative of school districts and industry leaders that leverages resources, talent, and intellectual capital to help over a quarter million students graduate career and college ready. Member districts include Edmonds, Everett, Highline, Kent, Lake Washington, Marysville, Mukilteo, Northshore, Renton, Seattle, Shoreline, and Tacoma. The program provides opportunities for instructors to learn more about industry employment opportunities through tours of various employers. In 2020-2021, 175 educators across 12 school districts participated.

Measure of success: Percentage of educators that embed more real-world examples and connections to out-of-school experiences

iv. Develop workforce development collateral materials to be used at festivals, farmers markets etc. (\$2,000)

The Port has a goal of participating in 15 festival or farmer market booths per year (assuming the anticipated addition of a Community Affairs Specialist). Collateral materials promoting career opportunities, training opportunities and the Port's investment in workforce development can be included at the event.

Measure of success: Number of touches

b. Skills Development Alternatives

i. Participate in Tacoma School District's CTE Advisory Board (Within existing resources) *

Commissioner Keller and Leslie Barstow serve on the CTE Advisory Board. Tacoma Schools would like a presence on that Board and the Career Connected Learning Advisory Board; leadership roles are also available on those boards.

* Current Port initiative

The Port could rally businesses to be a part of the advisory and to be a part of the programming, providing opportunities for the students.

- ii. Encourage development of a maritime high school in Pierce County and/or maritime extension program (Within existing resources) ***
The Port would serve primarily as a cheerleader for a maritime high school and/or maritime extension program through the Bethel Skills Center and continue to engage with interested parties and encourage collaboration and coordination as appropriate.
Measure of success: Program establishment.
- iii. Apprenticeship utilization requirement (Within existing resources) ***
The Port currently **requires** 15% Apprenticeship Participation for all projects estimated to cost \$1 million or more. Apprentices must come from an apprenticeship program registered and approved by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council.
Measure of success: Number of apprentice hours
- iv. Resume Port internship program (\$40,000/year) ***
Internship opportunities vary each year and are offered with a variety of departments. Most internships are full-time during the summer. Students apply classroom learning in a real work setting to perform normal work activities and/or special projects, and gain access to the knowledge and expertise of Port staff. To be eligible to participate, candidates must be enrolled in an accredited school, college or university. Students will be considered based on their qualifications and course of study. All internships are paid at an hourly rate of \$15/hour for undergraduates and \$18/hour for graduate students. Internship Opportunities are posted each spring for summer employment. The program has been suspended due to COVID-19/remote work, but staff anticipates it will resume in 2023.
Measure of success: Number of interns
- v. Youth Marine Foundation lease (\$185,244/year) ***
The Port of Tacoma currently leases property to the Youth Marine Foundation. At a rate of \$2,177.85/month. The Real Estate Department estimates this annual rent is \$100,000 below market rate, freeing up capital for the Foundation to invest in programs and/or other capital investments.
Measure of success: Number of participants
- vi. Participate in Tacoma Public Schools Certification Program (Within existing resources) ***
While currently suspended because of COVID-19, the Port has provided tours to program participants and hosted the graduation event and would hope to resume its involvement in the near future.
Measure of success: Number of participants completing program.
- vii. Lobby in support of workforce development (Within existing resources)**
Include workforce development priorities of local stakeholders (e.g., Bethel Skills Center, school districts, Tacoma Youth Marine Foundation, community and

technical colleges etc.) that support building, logistics and manufacturing trades in the Port’s legislative agenda. Support fellow stakeholders’ lobbying efforts. Examples may include capital budget provisos, increased funding for Core-Plus or other initiatives.

Measure of success: Achieve legislative priorities

viii. Facilitate development of aluminum welding program (Within existing resources)

The Port would facilitate a conversation between its boat manufacturing tenants and the local technical colleges about the development of an aluminum welding program.

Measure of success: Aluminum welding program is established.

These investment alternatives may be depicted graphically as follows:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Major Industry Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school recruiter 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Major Skills Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Central internships and paid work • Workforce Development Investment Fund • CDL training facility • Certified apprenticeship program
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Medium Industry Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in Hire Pierce County Job Fair • Update Gateway to the World Book • Increase # of school career fairs • Social media campaign 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Medium Skills Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investment in Tacoma Public Schools Certification Program
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minor Industry Awareness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Gateway to the World * • Host career fair • Washington Alliance for Better Schools • Workforce development collateral materials • Participate in Hire Pierce County Job Fair * 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Minor Skills Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tacoma School District’s CTE Advisory Board * • Encourage maritime high school * • Apprenticeship utilization requirement * • Port internship program * • Youth Marine Foundation Lease * • Maintain investment in Tacoma Public Schools Certification Program * • Lobby in support of workforce development • Facilitate aluminum welding program

D. NEXT STEPS

1. May

Staff seeks input from labor and underrepresented communities on investment options. Staff refines investment options and finalizes recommendation for Workforce Development Strategy.

2. June Workforce Development Committee review and approval of Workforce Development Strategy recommendation.
3. July Commission consideration of Workforce Development Strategy
4. Aug. Department budget recommendations updated based on Commission action on Workforce Development Strategy
5. Nov. Commission budget adoption
6. Dec. 2022 Commission consideration of contracts (if needed)
- Jan. 2023
7. Jan. 2023 Implementation of Workforce Development Strategy