

- (6) The Fund will build on established programs and commitments to fulfill current obligations;
- (7) The Fund will promote innovation; and
- (8) The Fund will encourage matching funds where possible.

COVID-19 has had multiple economic impacts, including workers having to stay home, interruptions to supply chains, disruptions to small businesses and hourly workers, and export-dependent businesses struggling to deliver products to key international markets.

The legislature has authorized port districts to engage in economic development activities. RCW 53.08.245 provides that it is “in the public purpose for all port districts to engage in economic development programs.” The Port’s economic development purposes, to advance economic development, advance trade and commerce, to promote industrial growth and to stimulate economic development, also include economic development activities such as occupational job training and placement, job advancement and job retention, preapprenticeship training, occupational education programs, or apprenticeship and employment strategies for youth. The Port’s economic development and recovery efforts will be tied to activities that benefit the Port, its tenants, or Port-related industries.

In the July 1, 2014, “Motion of the Port of Seattle Commission Increasing Workforce Development and Career Opportunities Activities,” the Port of Seattle Commission stated that workforce development is critical to achieving the Port’s primary mission to serve as an economic development agency generating quality, family-wage jobs and economic growth for the region and increasing operational efficiency and economic mobility.

The Port of Seattle Commission defined workforce development in the July 1 motion: “workforce development is defined as education, training, job matching, and related services that both help connect local workers to careers, and that help ensure area companies have access to the skilled workforce they need to thrive and grow.”

The Port of Seattle and other public entities in the Seattle region have also defined economic development broadly to address equity and environmental justice concerns. For example, the PSRC’s regional economic strategy distinguishes between “traditional economic development priorities such as transportation, education, international trade and the region’s business climate” and “newer emphasis areas,” which “include a specific rural strategy, initiatives to grow jobs throughout the region, advancing social equity” The Port’s current workforce development policy, passed in the 2014 motion, embraces this broad application of economic development. The Port’s Economic Development Partnership program, and Toursim grant program, are also economic development investments that support tourism promotion, small business assistance, business recruitment, trade development and workforce development.

The Commission confirms and declares that port-related workforce development provides a substantial public benefit consistent with the Commission’s economic development goals, and is consistent with ongoing worker training initiatives in place in the port district.

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90 One of the current purposes of the Fund is to advance equity. The Port recognizes that
91 communities of color and other historically marginalized communities tend to be more
92 vulnerable throughout all phases of a large scale public crisis or disaster, from preparedness to
93 immediate response to longer-term recovery. In its response to the pandemic, the Port has an
94 opportunity and responsibility to ensure equitable engagement for the most vulnerable.

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96 The Fund principles approved in June 2019, along with the new element of economic recovery,
97 will continue to guide the distribution of money from the Fund as the Executive implements the
98 COVID-19 recovery plan. Funding will be continue to be available for the environmental projects
99 previously planned under the authority of this fund.