



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 81

**ACTION ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** February 8, 2022

**DATE :** January 7, 2022

**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

**FROM:** Bookda Gheisar, Sr. Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

**SUBJECT: Multi-Year Program Authorization Increase Request for the Opportunity Youth Initiative**

**Amount of this request:** **\$2,100,000**

**Total estimated project cost:** **\$2,100,000**

**ACTION REQUESTED**

Request Commission authorization for the Executive Director to approve a not-to-exceed funding amount of \$2,100,000 to execute contracts for a three-year program starting 2022 for the Opportunity Youth Initiative.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Request authorization for the Executive Director to allocate \$2,100,000 to support building a permanent youth training and workforce development program for the Port of Seattle. This permanent program will begin with an open, competitive procurement process to select community organizations and programs that are the best fit for a three-year program (2022-2024) for the Opportunity Youth Initiative. Contracts will be for three years with a not-to-exceed a total of \$2,100,000.

In 2020 in response to the pandemic’s disproportionate impact on youth of color in our region, the Port created the Opportunity Youth Initiative. The highly successful youth training and professional development program has now been in place for two years. Coming back to the Commission, now, this request seeks authorization to create a permanent youth training and workforce development program beginning with making selections and financial commitment for three years to organizations involved in training programs. The 2022 budget for this program was approved for \$1,000,000 as part of the 2022 budget.

Beginning in July of 2020, Staff obtained a Commission Competitive Exemption to partner with four local non-profit organizations — Seattle Goodwill, Partner in Employment, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, and Seattle Parks Foundation — providing youth of color and low-income

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youth with professional training and workforce development opportunities. The Opportunity Youth Initiative was an unqualified success in 2020. The \$1.5 million investment in the community provided nearly 200 youth with paid learning opportunities designed to build skills to succeed in the workplace, created learning opportunities connecting young people to a long-term career path in a port-related industry, strengthened the community, and supported young people and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, as part of continuing COVID recovery efforts, Staff requested an additional Commission Competitive Exemption to partner with the same four organizations for up to \$2.0 million to continue training and workforce development efforts to support the youth and families most impacted by COVID as well as to support efforts to introduce more BIPOC youth to Port related jobs and industries. As a result, 291 youth received training on jobs in maritime, aviation, trades/construction, and green jobs.

The Office of Equity is now seeking to create a permanent program and, as a first step, moving forward with an open, competitive procurement process to identify and award contracts with expertise, knowledge, curriculum, and training programs in Port-related career tracks of aviation, maritime, trades/construction, and green jobs. This year's program would seek to partner with organizations in a three-year contract.

The Opportunity Youth Initiative is in furtherance of the Port's economic development authority, including statutory authorities such as RCW 53.08.245, as well as the Port's Workforce Development Resolution and Policy Directive, which was adopted to increase equitable access for workers in the maritime, aviation, construction trades and green jobs industries and create opportunities for workers to acquire the skills and education they need to secure increasingly complex and better compensated jobs.

The Office of Equity would capture learnings, evaluate the program, and report to the Executive Director in on-going communications as well to the Commission in an annual meeting.

**JUSTIFICATION**

This request supports the following Port's Century Agenda and Strategic Goals:

- (1) Responsibly invest in the Economic Growth of the Region and all its communities.
- (2) Become a Model for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

**BUDGET STATUS AND SOURCE OF FUNDS**

The budget for the program was approved for \$1,000,000 in the 2022 budget; an additional \$1,100,000 is needed to fully fund the \$2,100,000 multi-year program.

The source of funds will be tax levy for the program.

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**ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED**

**Alternative 1** – Decision to not allocate funds for 2022.

Cost Implications: \$2,100,000

Pros:

- (1) Cost savings.

Cons:

- (1) Opportunities for youth of color for a living wage job and training decreases.
- (2) Community needs and disparity issues are not addressed.

This is not the recommended alternative.

**Alternative 2** – Approve allocation of funds to execute contracts in 2022.

Cost Implications: \$2,100,000

Pros:

- (1) Aligns with the Port’s Century Agenda and Strategic Goals.
- (2) Builds upon the 2020 and 2021 Opportunity Youth Initiative programs to provide a permanent training program starting in 2022.
- (3) Meets the disparity needs of our community.
- (4) Provides training in Port-related industries to provide opportunities for living wage jobs and career paths for youth.

Cons:

- (1) Funding cost.

***This is the recommended alternative.***

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST**

- (1) None

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

May 11, 2021 – Order No. 2021-05 for 2021 Opportunity Youth Initiative Funding

December 8, 2020 – 2020 Opportunity Youth Initiative Commission Meeting Summary Briefing

June 23, 2020 – Motion 2020-18 adopted by the Port Commissioners

May 26, 2020 – Motion 2020-12 was amended and adopted by the Port Commissioners