



placement. WSU is facing a 6 percent budget reduction starting July 1 for two years, which will require an increase in investment to bring extension opportunities to communities. Investment can be through direct funding or through local investment networks that help develop entrepreneurial funding sources.

### **Return on investment**

The presence of a WSU extension office brings an influx of local, state, and federal dollars to local economies. According to Mr. Gaffney, the return on the local, state, and federal investment is roughly a 3:1 ratio. For every \$1 invested, the extension returns about \$3 to the economy. WSU extensions provide direct jobs, student opportunities, and volunteering opportunities. They support the primary industries that form the basis of an economy (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, tourism) as well as secondary economies by creating more need and opportunity for services to support primary industries.

MFA recommends the following:

- Coordinating with partners to determine need, level of interest, and ability to fund an extension office in Columbia County.
- Building the case for need and a program that is unique to Columbia County.
- Contacting Michael Gaffney to discuss possibilities for the Port of Columbia and Columbia County to collaborate with WSU.

### **BLUE MOUNTAIN STATION—HOUSING**

MFA and Port Executive Director Jennie Dickinson have scheduled a follow-up meeting with City of Dayton Planner Ryan Paulson on Wednesday, May 10, 2023, to discuss utility connections for the Blue Mountain Station property.

### **FUNDING STRATEGY**

The April 2023 meeting established that an evaluation and sorting of primary funding programs available to the Port should be included as part of a future Comprehensive Plan update. MFA recommends that this funding strategy take the form of an organized matrix. Examples are attached to the memo to illustrate this approach.

The funding matrix is a living document. It contains basic information about relevant state and federal grants, loans, and technical assistance resources, with information that is current at the time of development. The matrix is designed to be updated periodically as new grant opportunities arise. Program guidelines change from year to year, and grant program managers are always the best resource for the most current information.

Primary matrix components include the following:

- The cover sheet includes a quick reference list with links to primary funding sources.
- The calendar of funding deadlines includes a rough estimate of grant periods, based on past available data.
- The Grants, Loans and Technical Assistance section contains more detailed information, including contact information for program managers, where available. As appropriate, the funding programs in this table can be sorted by best fit and relevance to Port priority projects.

## **GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The role of Washington State ports in economic development is two-fold and dependent upon the drivers of the local, state, and national economies. Ports participate in economic development in two ways: through participation as a community partner in programmatic economic development, and through brick-and-mortar investments in facilities, infrastructure, and commercial and industrial real estate. Economic development as a port can be complicated—pulling in factors that are both within and outside a port’s control—and contentious. Ports must support their actions with data, work to align them with other local priorities, and communicate early and often to their communities about projects and initiatives undertaken in the name of economic development.

To understand the Port of Columbia’s role in economic development, it is necessary to first examine the local economy and what drives it, from a data-based perspective. Data can come from many sources; the most reliable sources include the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) and local economic assessments. As discussed in previous workshops, data from Commerce show that the economy in Columbia County is driven primarily by existing small businesses and local government, with significant contributions from a few large businesses (e.g., those involved in wind energy). Key industries include agriculture, energy, government, and tourism. The unemployment rate is low at 5.2 percent (2022) and wages are competitive with the rest of the state (excluding King County).

The next step is understanding which assets support the existing workforce in Columbia County, as well as workers and employers who are considering locating in Columbia County. As discussed in previous workshops, the Port has invested proactively in facilities and infrastructure that support the local economy, including light industrial and recreational facilities, Blue Mountain Station, and broadband infrastructure. However, the county struggles with limited diversity in housing, a lack of childcare options, and a shortage of industrial lands.

The next step is to connect the Port of Columbia’s current and future assets and capabilities to the economic challenges and needs of workers and employers. This involves a combination of understanding the current state of assets, focusing on the Port’s mission, and strategically forecasting where the Port and its community want to be in the coming years. This step involves relying on keystone documents, including the approved Comprehensive Plan and (if applicable) a strategic plan.

The Port should also consider the goals and input of the community, including agencies, partners, businesses, and of course, district taxpayers. Documents that can support the understanding of these goals include city and county comprehensive plans and partner strategic plans.

MFA recommends the following:

- Developing a strong grasp of the inputs and outputs that are driving the local economy and the largest challenges facing workers and businesses that the Port can help address.
- Engaging with other ports and the Washington Public Ports Association to learn about best practices, resources, and creative solutions to economic challenges across the state and in other communities.
- Researching partners' comprehensive plans and strategic goals to consider alignment with Port goals and investments.
- Broadly engaging with the community to receive direct input from taxpayers, other agencies, community organizations, businesses, and others about what they need and desire the Port to address.

Attachment: Example funding matrices

Category	Federal/State	Grant	Website	Match Required	Appropriateness for City Needs	Notes
	Grant Funding					
	Best fit					
Parks	State	Recreation Projects – WA Wildlife and Recreation Program	<a href="#">Recreation Projects-Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - RCO</a>	50%, 10% non-state, non-federal requirement	Most	
Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure	State	Pedestrian & Bicycle Program	<a href="#">Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle program WA Dep. Of Transportation</a>	Not required	Most	
Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure	State	Safe Routes to School Program	<a href="#">Safe Routes to School Program</a>	Not required	Most	
Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure	State	Complete Streets Award	<a href="#">Complete Streets Award</a>	Not required	Most	Next round of funding likely in 2024.
Placemaking	Private	National Association of Realtors Placemaking Grant	<a href="#">Placemaking Grant &amp; Resources</a>	None	Most	Work through the local chapter of the Nat'l Assn of Realtors.
	<b>Potential fit</b>					
Bicycle- and Pedestrian-Friendly Infrastructure	Federal	Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)	<a href="#">Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program   US Department of Transportation</a>	20%, non-Federal	Less	New funding, applications due Sept. 15. For more information, visit <a href="https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A">https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A</a> .
Parks	Federal, administered through State	Land and Water Conservation Fund (state program)	<a href="#">Land and Water Conservation Fund - Recreation and Conservation Office</a>	50%, 10% of which must be non-state, non-federal	Less	
Energy	State	Electrification of Transportation Systems Program	<a href="#">Electrification of Transportation Systems Program</a>	50% unless partnership justifies a match reduction. Cash only, must be non-state.	Less	First stage applications due Sept. 15. See <a href="https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/clean-energy-fund/electrification-of-transportation/">https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/clean-energy-fund/electrification-of-transportation/</a> for more information.
Placemaking	Federal	Our Town	<a href="#">OUR TOWN   National Endowment for the Arts</a>	1:1 match required, using non-federal funds	Less	
Parks and Historic Restoration	State	Heritage Capital Projects	<a href="#">Heritage Capital Projects</a>	33% (2:1 match). No state funding or dollars already used to match other state funding can count toward match for HCP.	Less	
	<b>Weak fit</b>					
Parks	State	Youth Athletic Facilities	<a href="#">Youth Athletic Facilities - RCO (wa.gov)</a>	50%, 10% non-state, non-federal requirement	Less	
Placemaking	Federal	Grants for Arts Projects	<a href="#">Grants for Arts Projects</a>	50%, non-Federal	Less	
Parks, Historic Restoration, Façade Improvements, Local Business Support	Federal, administered by County	Community Development Block Grant	<a href="https://snohomishcountywa.gov/864/Community-Development-Block-Grant">https://snohomishcountywa.gov/864/Community-Development-Block-Grant</a>	None	Least	Proving direct benefit to low and moderate-income communities will be challenging, but could be possible if the investment targeted certain segments of TCM that align with lower income census blocks.

Primary Category	Secondary Category	Grant, Agency and Website	Eligibility	Match Required	Maximum Award	Timing	Fit for City Needs	Contact
		Grant Funding						
		Best fit						
Economic Development	Infrastructure	Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance (Economic Development Administration, Federal); <a href="https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oplId=321695">https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oplId=321695</a>	District Organization; Indian Tribe or a consortium of Indian Tribes; State, county, city, or other political subdivision of a State, including a special purpose unit of a State or local government engaged in economic or infrastructure development activities, or a consortium of political subdivisions; institution of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education; or public or private non-profit organization or association acting in cooperation with officials of a political subdivision of a State.	Typically 20%, though EDA can fund up to 100% depending on economic distress criteria	Historic average for Public Works grants is \$1.4 million, though sizes range from \$600,000 to \$3 million, and there isn't a hard upper limit. Economic Adjustment Assistance awards historically average \$850,000 but generally range from \$150,000 to \$1 million.	Rolling	Most	Laura Lives Economic Development Representative, Washington State (206) 200-1951 Lives@eda.gov
Economic Development	Infrastructure	Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB, State), <a href="https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/community-economic-revitalization-board/prospective-development-program/">https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/community-economic-revitalization-board/prospective-development-program/</a>	Eligible Applicants include: • Cities and Towns • Counties • Federally Recognized Indian Tribes • Municipal Corporations • Quasi-Municipal Corporations • Public Port Districts • Special Purpose Districts	50% cash match for total project cost, demonstrate economic feasibility with a supporting study	CERB will fund land acquisition as part of a larger construction project, with total project up to \$3 million, and up to 25% grant available as determined by underwriting process and debt service coverage ratio.	Rolling	Most	Leslie Wolff Outreach Specialist Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) leslie.wolff@commerce.wa.gov cell: 360.259.2671 (call or text)
Parks		Recreation Projects -- WA Wildlife and Recreation Program (Recreation and Conservation Office, State), <a href="https://rco.wa.gov/grant/washington-wildlife-and-recreation-program-recreation/">https://rco.wa.gov/grant/washington-wildlife-and-recreation-program-recreation/</a>	Cities, counties, towns Federally recognized Indian tribes Special purpose districts, port districts, or other political subdivisions of the state providing services to less than the entire state	50%, 10% non-state, non-federal requirement	\$500,000 for development (includes acquisition)	Awarded every 2 years. Early May of even year, apps are due. Over winter, they get their budget from the Legislature. They receive spending authority and can start writing contracts. Note that March 1 is the deadline for submitting a comprehensive recreation plan (so start looking now). Funding applications are due in May.	Most	Allison Dellwo Outdoor Grants Manager 360-867-8626 allison.dellwo@rco.wa.gov