

COVER MEMO

Briefing Date/Time: March 9, 2026
Staff Contact/Title: Alex Smith, (360) 528-8001, alexs@portolympia.com
Subject: WPPA Maritime Industrial Base Coalition
Purpose: Information Only Decision Needed

Type of Agenda Item:

Action/Other

Background:

WPPA recently kicked off a new initiative: the formation of a “Maritime Industrial Base Coalition” (MIBC) to explore the next steps for our region’s maritime manufacturing, shipbuilding, and repair industry.

On Monday, January 26th, the WPPA Executive Committee voted to approve the formation of the MIBC. The charter for the MIBC is attached, along with the Scope of Work that will be executed by a consultant hired by WPPA and managed by the Steering Committee.

WPPA is asking interested ports to serve on the MIBC Steering Committee, and to sign an MOU between the participating ports and WPPA. The MOU will confirm our port’s engagement in this work.

WPPA initially approached ports with shipyard tenants or maritime manufacturing operations to join the Steering Committee (signers so far are Ports of Seattle, Everett, Anacortes, Port Angeles, Kalama, and Skagit). Yet, WPPA also heard from other ports about participating in the MIBC -- ports who could be part of a supplier network, who have land that could be used for future shipbuilding or repair options, or who are otherwise just interested in what this initiative will do for WA’s maritime economy.

The coalition will also be open to other ports who would like to join, but who may not want to sign the MOU. WPPA is open to their support of this effort and who want to see our state’s maritime manufacturing industry succeed.

The roles and responsibilities of Steering Committee include:

- Designating a port representative to engage on the Steering Committee;
- Consistent engagement on the Steering Committee; Regular communication about the MIBC’s work to stakeholders in the port’s district; and
- Contribution to the effort through financial or in-kind support.

The agreement will be effective through, at the latest, June 30, 2027.

WPPA would like to confirm all MOU signers by early March so it can bring the Steering Committee formally together in late March for the consultant to lay out his work plan.

Summary & Financial Impact:

This effort allows the Port of Olympia to be part of state-wide discussions about restoring Washington's position as a leader in maritime shipbuilding and commerce. The potential long-term financial impacts are unknown, and the short-term impact of signing the MOU is also unknown. The cost of participation in the MOU will be the subject of further discussion and will in no event exceed \$100,000.

Alignment with Vision 2050:

This initiative aligns with the Vision 2050 goal to support a working waterfront and diversify marine terminal operations, including pursuing "value-added manufacturing opportunities at the marine terminal."

Environmental Considerations and Review:

N/A

Alternatives Considered:

N/A

Staff Recommendation:

Staff offers a sample motion:

"I move to authorize the Executive Director to sign the 2026-2027 Memorandum of Understanding for a Manufacturing Industrial Base Coalition."

Document(s) Attached:

- WPPA Maritime Industrial Base Coalition Charter
- Scope of Work – Maritime Industrial Base Coalition – Convening Consultant Roadmap
- Draft "2026-2027 Memorandum of Understanding for Manufacturing Industrial Base Coalition"