

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

CONSENT AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Greg Brotherton, Commissioner
Amanda Christofferson, Grants Administrator

DATE: April 22, 2024

RE: Letter of Commitment for the North Olympic Peninsula Recompete Coalition (NOPRC) application to Recompete Phase II.

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

This expresses the support of Jefferson County for the NOPRC Phase II application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration Distressed Area Recompete Program for \$50M grant.

ANALYSIS:

The letter acknowledges the interests of Jefferson County specifically as well as the regional impact of receiving a grant opportunity of this magnitude.

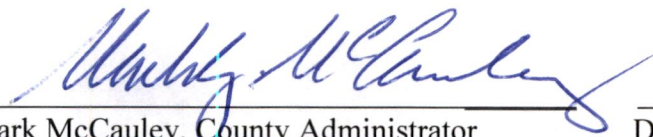
FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

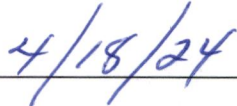
RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend the BoCC sign the letter of support.

REVIEWED BY:



Mark McCauley, County Administrator



Date



Board of County Commissioners
1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Kate Dean, District 1 Heidi Eisenhour, District 2 Greg Brotherton, District 3

April 22, 2024

The Honorable Alejandra Castillo
Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue N.W., Suite 20230
Washington, DC 20230

Re: North Olympic Peninsula Recompete Coalition Support and Commitments

Dear Assistant Secretary Castillo,

Jefferson County deeply values the opportunity to engage in Phase 2 of the RECOMPETE grant. As the Economic Development Administration (EDA) continues to refine its programs, we advocate for sustained emphasis on fostering regional cooperation in economic development—an endeavor that has already yielded significant benefits for our region of the North Olympic Peninsula. The challenges of initiating regional collaboration have been surmounted, resulting in a stronger, more unified approach to our economic challenges.

Throughout both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the RECOMPETE process, Jefferson County has actively participated as a Task Force Member. We have committed to a network of interconnected projects aimed at addressing the Prime Age Employment Gap (PAEG) in our region. Initially, in Phase 1, our focus included essential infrastructure developments at Glen Cove Industrial Park. However, during the Phase 2 Application process, we shifted our support to the Port of Port Townsend's Westward Boatyard Expansion project, which more closely aligns with our immediate needs to enhance infrastructure for small businesses and the maritime sector.

Despite this shift, the Glen Cove project remains a crucial commitment of Jefferson County. It continues to benefit from the downstream impacts of our coalition's efforts, supported by a \$60,000 Strategy and Development Grant aimed at facilitating critical public outreach to integrate Glen Cove into the Urban Growth Area (UGA) of Port Townsend. This initiative complements and informs the ongoing Periodic Update to our Comprehensive Plan.

Moreover, we are addressing pervasive barriers such as childcare, in collaboration with local organizations like the YMCA. The potential Phase 2 Award will significantly bolster these efforts and help us achieve the broader objectives of RECOMPETE. Jefferson County commits to continuing these collective initiatives and conversations on a regional level.

With the rural nature of our region, it remains challenging to serve small communities effectively. Our workforce training plan with Peninsula College and the Northwest School of Wooden Boat Building includes bringing training directly to the people and expanding workforce training opportunities within our urban centers as well as with remote and mobile training options where able. This approach will empower our communities, support the evolution of our traditional industries—Forest Resources and Maritime—and create living-wage jobs while reducing barriers for our prime-age workforce. The Spud Barge Project from the Port of Port Angeles is a great example of addressing the barrier of transportation that is very acute on a Peninsula with one main route, and many business opportunities locked up by the high cost of transportation from the West End that can be unlocked with full use of the marine highway.

In conclusion, Jefferson County is eager to continue and expand our involvement in the NOPRC. We respectfully request a Phase 2 award, but either way we look forward to further collaboration. Thank you for considering our ongoing and future commitments under this impactful program.

Sincerely,

Kate Dean, Chair, Dist. No. 1

Heidi Eisenhour, Dist. No. 2

Greg Brotherton, Dist. No. 3