

WPPA Maritime Industrial Base Coalition - Charter

Overview: On January 26th, the WPPA Executive Committee approved the formation of the Maritime Industrial Base Coalition, to be led by the Washington Public Ports Association and a steering committee comprised of port members. The primary goal of the WPPA Maritime Industrial Base Working Group is to restore Washington's primacy in maritime manufacturing and prepare ports and partners for significant federal investment in domestic shipbuilding, repair, and maintenance.

The Maritime Industrial Base Coalition will execute on a draft scope of work developed by WPPA staff in consultation with members, with the majority of the scope being undertaken by a consultant team hired by WPPA.

The Coalition will be overseen by a Steering Committee comprised of port members who sign a Memorandum of Agreement outlining the basic engagement principles and responsibilities of Steering Committee members. Funding for consultant support will be primarily borne by members of the Steering Committee through special dues assessments paid to WPPA.

Background: In fall 2025, WPPA was approached by port members with concerns about Washington's maritime manufacturing industry and the ability of ports and our tenants and partners to compete for publicly funded investments in shipbuilding, repair, and maintenance. The State of Washington's award of a lucrative ferry construction contract to a Florida shipbuilder was a catalyzing event, as was the federal government's announcement of several areas of potential investment in maritime manufacturing and their stated goal to "revitalize and rebuild domestic maritime industries and workforce."

Following initial conversations with port members who suggested WPPA lead convening work, we contacted executive directors at ports with active shipbuilding operations as tenants to gauge their interest. While all voiced concern that certain structural factors pose a substantial challenge – from labor costs to permitting regulations – there was general consensus that the current federal focus and recent state decisions did suggest we should step into a leadership role in this conversation. The Port of Seattle volunteered resources to support an initial phase of convening, undertaken through a consultant contract, and remaining ports indicated a willingness to engage and meaningfully participate in the current phase and provide financial support in future phases. The scope of work to direct the consultant across an initial three phases of work was developed jointly by WPPA and prospective Steering Committee members.

Membership:

Convener:

Washington Public Ports Association

Proposed Steering Committee members:

Invited as of 1.31.26

Port of Anacortes

Port of Bellingham

Port of Bremerton

Port of Everett

Port of Grays Harbor

Port of Kalama

Port of Port Angeles

Port of Seattle

Port of Skagit

Port of Tacoma

Port of Vancouver USA

Timeline:

Fall 2025 – WPPA begins member conversations

November 2025 – Initial conversation at WPPA Executive Committee regarding member interest

January 2026 – Scope of Work finalized by WPPA and member ports

January 26, 2026 – WPPA Executive Committee votes on recommendation to form Coalition

January 31, 2026 – WPPA hires consultant to manage Coalition and execute Scope of Work

December 2026 – MIBC Steering Committee receives recommendation on Phase III work from consultant team

Scope of Work – Maritime Industrial Base Coalition – Convening Consultant Roadmap
January 29, 2026

Topline: Washington is yielding its position as a leading maritime state. The award of the latest WSF vessel construction contract to a Florida shipbuilder is the latest example of the sustained challenges facing the state's maritime industry. The message is clear: Washington must prioritize reclaiming our competitive edge in maritime manufacturing.

There is an imminent infusion of federal funding into the maritime industry, with a stated goal of "restoring America's maritime dominance." Additionally, this December, Governor Ferguson announced a proposal to spend \$1 billion to purchase three new state ferries to get closer to meeting the goal of replacing the aging ferry fleets before 2040. These federal and state investments pose significant opportunities for Washington's maritime sector, with benefits felt far beyond the waterfront, and could mean up to \$30 billion to amplify shipbuilding and maritime industrial base development. Any investment of this magnitude would significantly impact Washington's maritime sector, with benefits felt far beyond the waterfront.

How can we help restore Washington's maritime dominance, and what do maritime industry stakeholders need to do to position Washington as a leader in this next phase of investment and activation?

Goal:

- Send a signal that Washington's strong maritime legacy will power its maritime future.
- Implement policies to position Washington state to be a leader in maritime manufacturing and vessel construction, as well as a maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) hub for the West Coast.
- Support national interest in developing an Arctic support strategy, capitalizing on Washington's proximity and historical links to Alaska and the Arctic, and Washington's core capabilities to serve national and international maritime policy priorities.
- Pursue a coordinated advocacy approach to address hurdles – including workforce, permitting, and cost challenges – to a reinvigorated shipbuilding and repair industry
- Address workforce and training shortages that have developed in our industry and rendered us less competitive internationally

Scope of Work:

- Convene Maritime Industrial Base Working Coalition
 - o Following passage by WPPA Executive Committee of the proposal to establish a Maritime Industrial Base Coalition, consultant will take the initial step of convening the Coalition Steering Committee
 - o Steering Committee will initially consist of port members who have expressed interest in serving in a leadership role on the Maritime Industrial Base Coalition
 - o Steering Committee will meet monthly to receive updates from consultant on progress toward executing scope of work
 - o Steering Committee will use monthly meetings to propose updates or additions to Scope of Work, as appropriate
- Convene Leadership Tables:
 - o Host events with stakeholders to identify and discuss opportunities and challenges for our maritime industry
 - o Identify and strengthen relationships with stakeholders that have specific maritime, manufacturing, technology, or other expertise
 - o Hold focused meetings with specific stakeholder subsets to gauge interest in pursuing new maritime investment and business opportunities
 - o Activate support and identify champions to sustain this work
 - o Convene regular meetings with industry leaders to seek guidance from shipbuilders and maritime manufacturers
- Conduct a Landscape Analysis:
 - o How do our labor partners view this current challenging moment in maritime manufacturing? Do they view this as a major opportunity to expand their workforce? What are the most persistent challenges? Can we identify strategies to affect change in those challenging areas?
 - o What do the shipyards and shipbuilders think, do they want this work and do they have the capacity to build more?
 - o What role can Washington's ports play in advancing this work? How can an expanded maritime industrial base support strategic goals of Washington's public ports?
 - o How does the lending /investment/finance industry view the regional maritime sector? What needs to happen for them to invest in the region?
 - o What existing efforts are underway in our region to support maritime industrial base expansion?
 - o What regulatory hurdles and competition (national/global) challenges stand in the way of developing new industrial facilities to serve this new demand?
 - o Is this more than just Washington: should we consider a regional (i.e. multi-state) model?

- What lessons and best practices can be learned from other industries that work together with maritime? Do other industries have shared interests in building workforce capacity to help inform the process and make it more efficient?
- Conduct a Gap Analysis:
 - Workforce development: Evaluate existing training programs and identify unaddressed training needs. Determine ideal workforce size and composition.
 - Develop an understanding of, and identify gaps in, current higher education and technical and training programs that feed into workforce needs.
 - What types of facilities will be needed to train workers?
 - Facilities:
 - What are the current shipyards in the state?
 - What manufacturers currently supply those shipyards?
 - What capacity do those shipyards have to expand?
 - What capacity do their suppliers have to expand?
 - What about the role of “digital shipyards” and other industry innovations?
- Meeting cadence - Tours and outreach for maritime stakeholders:
 - Monthly: Leadership Coalition meets with Coalition Convener/Consultant
 - Semi-monthly: Industry Leaders Coalition meets with Leadership Coalition
 - Quarterly: Stakeholders and policymakers visit shipbuilding and maritime industrial facilities
 - Annual: Large event with tour component, legislatively focused
- Action plan:
 - Identify necessary policy changes and implementation path.
 - Do no harm: what policies, previously considered, would make this more challenging?
 - Identify sources of funding and incentives from state and federal government to catalyze this work. Determine whether funding programs need modifications to optimize maritime industry impact.
 - Identification of long-term funding strategies (purely private and PPP) and investors.

Phase outline:

Phase 1 (\$13,500 fees, \$12,000 reserve):

- Q1 2026 – Convene Coalition and Steering Committee, convene industry stakeholder group, first round of port and industry interviews, develop work plan
- Q2 2026 – Landscape analysis and gaps analysis – what are we missing?

Phase 2 (\$13,500 fees, \$6,000 reserve):

- Q3 2026 – Convene stakeholders and policymakers in a maritime manufacturing event to socialize outcomes from landscape and gaps analysis
- Q4 2026 – Recommend policy program, funding needs, and legislative advocacy strategy to achieve stated goals

Phase 3 (\$27,000 fees, \$18,000 reserve):

- 2027 and beyond – Stakeholders agree this is a multi-year, long-horizon initiatives, where new priorities and challenges will develop along the way

Timeline:

Activity	Timeline	Who's Leading?	Who's Engaged?
Develop coalition of Ports, convene broader stakeholder group, develop workplan	November 2025 – December 2025	WPPA	Coalition of Ports and industry partners.
Maritime Industrial Base Coalition officially approved by WPPA Executive Committee	January 26, 2026	WPPA	Coalition of Ports
Signing of MOU between WPPA and Steering Committee Members	February 2026	WPPA	Coalition of Ports
Consultant Research – Landscape Analysis and gaps analysis	February-June 2026	WPPA & consultant	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community partners, policymakers
Convene coalition and stakeholders to share work plan and seek additional feedback.	April 2026	WPPA & consultant	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community partners, policymakers
Convene large event with stakeholders and policymakers to socialize outcomes from landscape and gaps analysis	Q3 2026	WPPA & consultant	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community partners, policymakers
Recommend policy program and funding needs to achieve stated goals	Q4 2026	WPPA & consultant	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community partners, policymakers
Seek additional funding partners to	Q3-Q4 2026	WPPA	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community

support 2027 and beyond work			partners, policymakers
Develop action plan and implementation plan	2027 and beyond	WPPA	Ports, shipyards, industry, labor groups, community partners, policymakers

**2026-2027 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIAL BASE COALITION**

This Memorandum of Understanding (the “MOU”) is between:

the **PORT OF _____**, a Washington municipal corporation (the “Port”),

and

the **WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORTS ASSOCIATION**, a Washington nonprofit corporation (the “WPPA”),

and is entered into as of the last authorized signature below.

I. RECITALS

WHEREAS, the WPPA is organized pursuant to chapter 53.06 RCW;

WHEREAS, the Port is a member of the WPPA;

WHEREAS, the Port has elected to join a standing committee of the WPPA identified as the Maritime Industrial Base Coalition (the “MIBC”), as identified and organized according to this MOU;

WHEREAS, the port districts participating in the MIBC include the following (collectively the “Districts”):

- Port of Anacortes
- Port of Bellingham
- Port of Bremerton
- Port of Everett
- Port of Kalama
- Port of Grays Harbor
- Port of Port Angeles
- Port of Seattle
- Port of Skagit
- Port of Tacoma
- Port of Vancouver USA;

WHEREAS, the Districts each have tenants or industry partners who are engaged in the shipbuilding, ship repair, and maritime manufacturing industry;

WHEREAS, on April 9, 2025, the administration of President Donald J. Trump issued Executive Order 14269: Restoring America’s Maritime Dominance, which stated in part that: “It is the policy of the United States to revitalize and rebuild domestic maritime industries and workforce to promote national security and economic prosperity;”

WHEREAS, the July 1, 2025 decision by the State of Washington to award a multi-year, \$714.5 million ferry vessel construction contract to an out-of-state shipbuilder caused significant concerns about the health of Washington’s maritime construction industry;

WHEREAS, the Washington State maritime entities have been contacted by

consultants for the Department of Defense regarding their current Submarine Workforce and Industrial Base (“SWIB”) program, which aims to revitalize the maritime industrial base (“MIB”) by supporting strategic projects in Workforce Development, Supplier Development, Shipyard Infrastructure, Strategic Outsourcing, and Technology Opportunities to advance the U.S. Navy’s “1+2+Sustainment” mission—the future production of one Columbia Class submarine and two Virginia Class submarines per year in addition to the current fleet’s sustainment;

WHEREAS, in 2021, the State of Washington passed HB 1170 the “BEST Manufacturing Act,” which adopted a goal of doubling manufacturing jobs—adding 300,000 additional jobs in that sector—by 2030;

WHEREAS, in December 2025, Governor Bob Ferguson announced a proposal to spend \$1 billion to purchase three new state ferries to get closer to meeting the goal of replacing the aging Washington State ferry fleets before 2040;

WHEREAS, the Districts acknowledge that there are substantial hurdles to expanding maritime manufacturing in Washington State, including workforce challenges, permitting and regulatory challenges, and cost challenges;

WHEREAS, the Districts further desire to see that future shipbuilding, repair, and maritime manufacturing projects funded by public investment—including vessel construction contracts funded by the State of Washington—should see responses from in-state manufacturers that can compete with any national bids;

WHEREAS, the Districts are statutorily empowered to develop facilities that promote economic development;

WHEREAS, RCW 53.08.160 provides in relevant part:

All port districts organized under the provisions of this act shall be, and they are hereby, authorized and empowered to initiate and carry on the necessary studies, investigations and surveys required for the proper development, improvement and utilization of all port properties, utilities and facilities, and for industrial development within the district when such agricultural and industrial development is carried out by a public agency, institution, or body for a public purpose, and to assemble and analyze the data thus obtained and to cooperate with the state of Washington, other port districts and other operators of terminal and transportation facilities for these purposes, and to make such expenditures as are necessary for said purposes, and for the proper promotion, advertising, improvement and development of such port properties, utilities and facilities;

WHEREAS, on January 26, 2026, the WPPA Executive Committee voted to approve the formation of the Maritime Industrial Base Coalition;

WHEREAS, the work of the MIBC will align with a “Charter” document that has also been reviewed by the WPPA Executive Committee;

WHEREAS, the MIBC will provide support to WPPA consistent with other Standing Committees of WPPA as authorized in Article VII of the Association Bylaws; and

WHEREAS, the MIBC will execute a Scope of Work (the “Scope”) that is overseen by a Steering Committee, with the Scope included as an exhibit to this MOU and the role of the Steering Committee further described in Section A below.

II. TERMS

A. PURPOSE:

1. The purpose of this MOU is to cooperatively establish and fund the MIBC, which shall be governed by a Steering Committee comprised of one (1) representative from each of the Districts, and managed by the WPPA.

2. The work of the MIBC will be carried out by a consultant who will be hired by the WPPA to execute on the Scope that is approved by the Steering Committee. A copy of the Scope is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

3. The Consultant contract will cover the time period described in the Scope, which shall not exceed the duration of this MOU, pending amendment requested by any Districts and agreed to by other Districts.

4. The Consultant will be managed by WPPA in consultation with the Steering Committee, with WPPA serving as the fiscal agent for management and payment of the contract.

5. The Consultant will be responsible for convening the Steering Committee at regular intervals, with WPPA acting as the direct manager of the Consultant work, to report on the progress in execution of the Scope.

6. Proposed amendments to the Scope shall be approved by the Steering Committee prior to being communicated to the consultant.

7. The following exhibit is appended to this MOU and incorporated herein by reference:

Exhibit A – Scope of Work Proposed for Consultant Contract

B. STEERING COMMITTEE AND DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. For Phases I and II of the Scope, as described in **Exhibit A**, the Districts shall serve on the Steering Committee of the MIBC. Obligations of service on the Steering Committee include:

- a. Designation of one port staff member or commissioner to act as lead (“Districts Lead”) for the respective Districts engagement in the Steering Committee
- b. Consistent engagement in the work of the Steering Committee and the MIBC, including support for WPPA in its management of the Consultant
- c. Regular communication of the work of the Steering Committee and the MIBC to maritime industry stakeholders in their respective port communities

2. For Phases I and II, the contributions of each District shall be according to their

means and shall be paid to WPPA via a special assessment.

3. Contributions from the Districts may also take the form of in-kind support, including staff time; resources such as data, studies, and reports; and contacts with District partners including shipbuilding, repair, and maritime manufacturing entities.

C. WPPA ACCOUNTING FUNCTION

1. The WPPA shall function as the financial agent, as well as the client and primary manager of the Consultant contract. As the financial agent, the WPPA will:

- a. Receive payments from Districts and maintain a "Restricted Account" in the WPPA budget for management of District funds and payments to the Consultant.
- b. Provide regular updates to the Districts, through the Steering Committee, about payments made to the Consultant.
- c. Convene meetings of the Steering Committee to determine funding of subsequent phases of Consultant work.
- d. Communicate funding availability for subsequent phases directly to the Consultant.

D. DETERMINATION OF ANNUAL BUDGET AND DISTRICT FUNDING OBLIGATIONS

1. The Annual Budget for the MIBC shall be determined through the development of the contract with the consultant.

2. The Budget for each respective phase of the consultant contract shall be determined thirty (30) days' prior to the end of the preceding phase.

3. The financial obligations of each respective District shall be determined through individual discussion with WPPA and according to the means of each District.

4. The Districts will pay their obligation to the MIBC by paying a special assessment to WPPA, for which they will be individually invoiced.

E. EFFECTIVE DATE, TERM, AND TERMINATION

1. The "Effective Date" of this MOU shall be the date of the last authorizing signature below.

2. The "Term" of this MOU shall begin on the Effective Date and end on either December 31, 2026, or June 30, 2027, pending agreement on joint funding of Phase III of the Scope.

3. A District may withdraw from the MIBC by providing thirty (30) days' written notice to the WPPA.

4. Upon termination of the MOU, all Districts' obligations hereunder shall end, and any unspent funds held by WPPA shall be returned to the Districts who provided them.

PORT OF _____

WASHINGTON PUBLIC PORTS ASSOCIATION

By: _____
Its: _____
Date: _____

By: _____
Its: _____
Date: _____