

March-April 2020

How do we invent the future?

Port gears up for a major strategic planning effort



MAKE A NEW PLAN, STAN: The Port of Tacoma's last major strategic planning effort took place in 2012 (*brochures pictured above*). The plan focused on a 10-year planning horizon. With the creation of The Northwest Seaport Alliance in 2015, many elements of this original plan were adjusted accordingly.

One of the major priorities for the Port of Tacoma Commission and Executive Director Eric Johnson in 2020 is to develop a new strategic plan.

As many employees know, the Port of Tacoma's last major strategic planning effort was done in 2012. And while it's been reviewed and updated annually, the creation of The Northwest Seaport Alliance in 2015 dramatically changed many parts of the original 2012 plan, necessitating the creation a new strategic plan.

While the strategic planning process will help us answer many questions, perhaps the most important question to answer is one that Johnson posed in an internal kickoff session about the strategic planning effort, "What's the Port of Tacoma when it's not the NWSA?"

The Port hired the consulting firm Maul, Foster, Alongi (MFA) to help answer that question by engaging the commission, staff and external stakeholders to develop a clear vision and strategic plan that will guide the Port of Tacoma into the future.

MFA has worked with many organizations in developing their strategic plans, including the Port of Vancouver, the Port of Pasco and Whatcom County Public Utility District #1.

At the regular meeting March 19 Commission meeting, MFA presented their overall strategy and timeline for working with the commission, staff and key stakeholders in developing the Port's new strategic plan.

The presentation was led by Jim Darling, a principal planner with MFA and former executive director with the Port of Bellingham.

He highlighted how the consultants are designing the process and major phases, which will go through the end of this year.

Employee engagement is a key first step in the planning process. Employees and commissioners have been invited to attend one of three virtual workshops set for April 8 and 9.

During the virtual workshops, employees will be:

- Given an overview of our strategic plan approach and timeline;
- Briefed on the port powers and practices;
- Asked for their perspective on Port's area of strength and areas to work on; and
- Generating ideas on how the Port can best serve our community in the future.

In addition, all employees will be asked to share their ideas by completing an online survey that will be sent out soon after the April workshops have been held.

Later phases of the strategic planning process will involve Port customers, business and community leaders and other key stakeholders.

Depending how the COVID-19 situation evolves, many of these engagement efforts may also rely heavily on virtual engagement components.

If you have questions about the upcoming virtual workshops, please contact [Rod Koon](#).

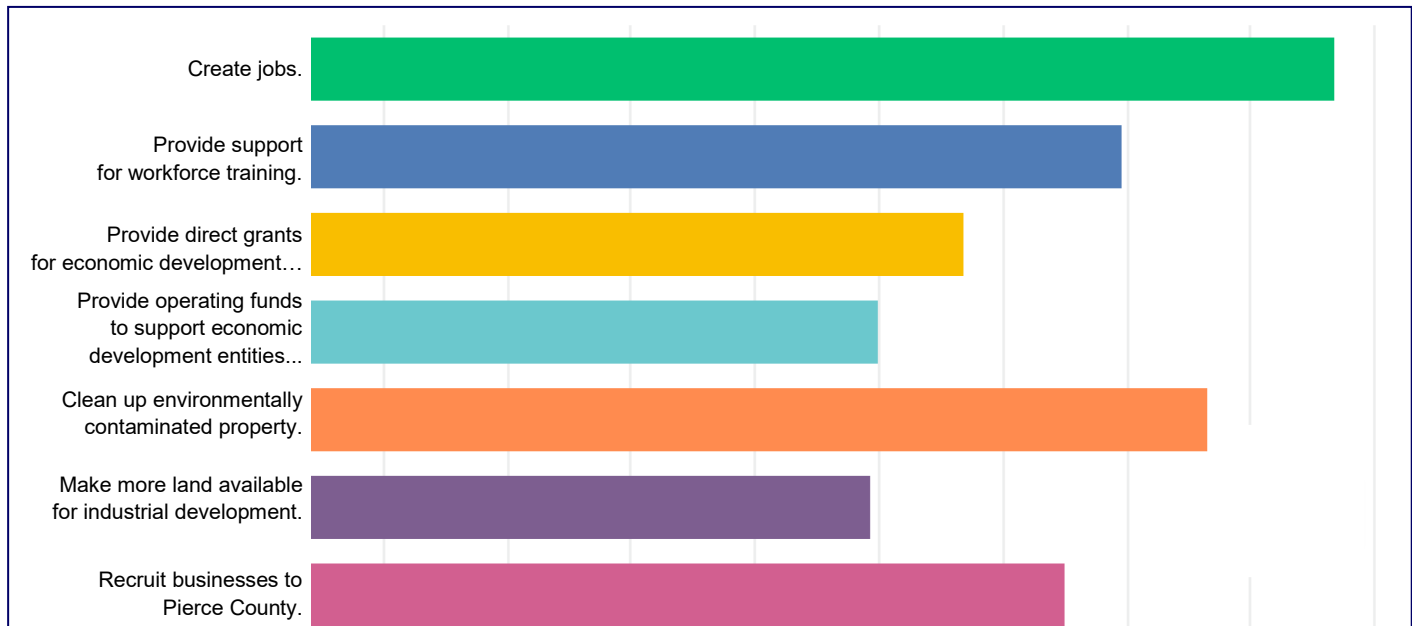
Reaching out and listening

Additional work sessions on the Strategic Plan will also be held with the Port Commission in July and August. These meetings are webstreamed live and are also archived for later viewing by the public.

July-August 2020

Community helps chart the Port's future

Outreach effort asks for public input for Strategic Plan



PICKING PRIORITIES: In the online Strategic Plan survey, citizens are asked to pick from a list the top five priorities they think would best help the Port serve the residents of Pierce County. So far, more than 110 people have completed the survey and “Create jobs” is the leading response.

What do you think will be the Port of Tacoma’s most important role for Pierce County for the next five years?

That’s just one of the questions the Port wants citizens to answer in its Strategic Plan online [survey](#).

The results from the survey will help the Port Commission and staff develop the key goals and priorities that will be in the plan.

You can also find out more about the Port of Tacoma and its Strategic Plan process by visiting their Virtual Strategic Open House [website](#).

The site also contains background on ports and their powers they have in our state. There are a total of 75 ports in Washington state and they each operate as a municipal corporation under state law.

Under Washington state law, here’s a sampling of what Washington’s ports can do: operate terminals and recreational boating facilities; develop land for industrial needs; operate trade centers and foreign trade zones and promote tourism.

“The feedback citizens provide throughout this Strategic Plan process will provide valuable information that will help the Port Commission and staff complete this important work,” said John McCarthy, President of the Port of Tacoma Commission.

Work on the Port’s Strategic Plan ramped up in April with virtual Strategic Plan workshops for employees and interviews with key stakeholders. The online Strategic Plan Open House launched in July. The Strategic Plan process is expected to run through the end of the year.

In addition to the open house, here are two other ways citizens can share their suggestions and questions about the Port’s Strategic Plan:

- Call the Port’s Strategic Plan Hotline: **253-888-4810**
- Send an email to: StrategicPlan@portoftacoma.com

Strategic Plan: Major upcoming dates

Aug. 14

Staff will meet to review the draft goals and work to develop strategies and details on how to support them.

Sept. 24

The Commission will review and discuss the revised goals and strategies in a special study session.

September-October 2020

Strategic Plan update

Commission to dive deep into foundational goals



IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION: For many years, the Port has been a leading advocate for strategic transportation improvements in our region. One example is the FAST Corridor Project, a \$450 million effort with various partners that helped fund 15 key infrastructure projects in Puget Sound—including the \$33 million Port of Tacoma Road Overpass (pictured above).

Work on our Strategic Plan is shifting into high gear.

The Commission will have five meetings between October and December that will include discussions on each of the Port's five foundational goals (formerly called "pillars"), strategies and tactics.

The Commission received a briefing on the foundational goals from Eric Johnson at their Oct. 15 meeting and gave approval to all five of them.

The Transportation Advocacy goal will be a major focus of the Oct. 29 Commission meeting. Staff will give the Commission an update on some of the major transportation studies and projects the Port has been involved in over the last 10 years. This will help set the stage for developing draft strategies to support the Transportation Advocacy goal. The Commission will also receive a presentation on the Port's future financial capacity at that meeting.

Here are the drafts of the five foundational goals that will help shape our Strategic Plan. They are shown in alphabetical order, along with a brief description of each:

Community Connections

Advance the Port's commitment to connect with the greater Pierce County by promoting partnerships and engaging with the community.

Economic Vitality

Create living-wage jobs and sustainable business development opportunities in Pierce County through Port leadership and direct investment.

Environmental Stewardship

Adopt operating practices and performance standards that meet or exceed regulatory obligations, proactively pursue environmental enhancement efforts, and advance environmental sustainability internally.

Organizational Health

Create and sustain an organizational

Strategic Plan 2020: Upcoming meetings and key topics

Oct. 29

Special Commission meeting
Presentation on the Port's financial capacity over the next five years
Review the Transportation Advocacy goal, strategies and tactics

Nov. 5

Commission study session
Review the Environmental Stewardship goal, strategies and tactics

Nov. 19

Regular Commission meeting
Review the Organizational Health goal, strategies and tactics

Dec. 3

Commission study session
Review the Economic Vitality goal, strategies and tactics

Dec. 17

Regular Commission meeting
Review the Community Connections goal, strategies and tactics

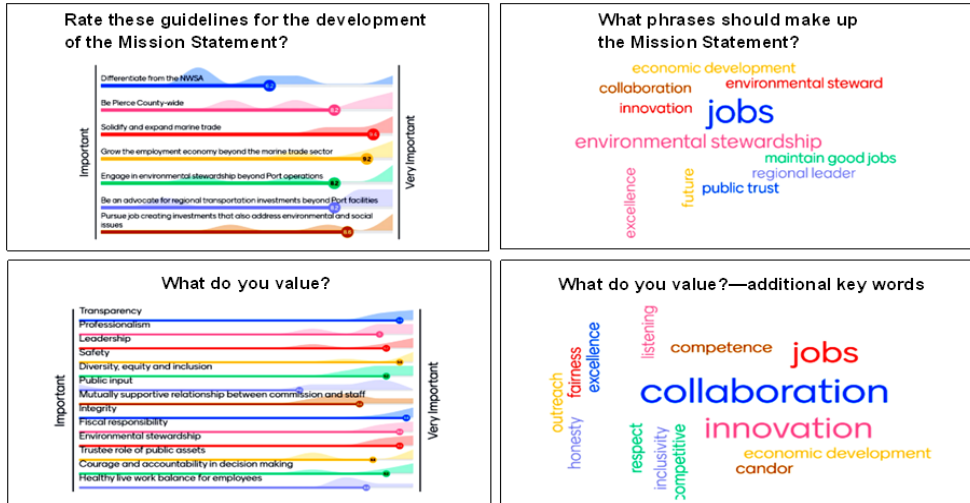
culture that prioritizes the Port's fiduciary role as a trustee of the public's assets, embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion, and achieves a high level of employee satisfaction.

Transportation Advocacy

Partner with lead agencies to support and advance transportation infrastructure critical to the maritime and regional economy.

Find out more about our Strategic Plan [here](#).

Updating our mission and values



COMMISSION COMMENTS: These four charts highlight the input and ideas our Commissioners gave about the Port's mission and values at the Commission meeting in November.

Updating an organization's mission and value statements are part of the Strategic Planning process. Together, our mission and values guide the work we do as an organization and keep us focused on where the organization is going and what we are trying to achieve. It's important that our mission and values are clearly understood and embraced by the entire organization.

A major focus area of our work on the Strategic Plan has involved working with the commission to develop updated mission and values statements. At the Nov. 17 commission meeting, commissioners provided their input to a series of questions posed by our Strategic Plan project consultant team (see above graphic for results to four of the questions).

In the second phase of this discussion, commissioners provided their feedback on several different mission statement options and answered questions related to values development. They also had a focused discussion on specific factors, such as job growth, the environment and more, and how these areas inform the Port's mission statement.

In the values part of the discussion, commissioners were asked **what** they value and **who** they value. They were also asked what audiences they wanted to better understand the Port's mission. The meeting focus then turned to the Mission Statement and key words the commissioners wanted to have in the Port's mission statement. The most recent Commission study

session on mission and values took place on Dec. 17. In that session, commissioners offered additional comments and suggestions a variety of recommended Port values—ranging from Collaboration and Innovation to Partnerships and Transparency.

They also discussed whether the Port's mission should continue to focus primarily on maritime-related jobs—or expand those efforts into broader areas. The Port's role in environmental stewardship and environmental partnerships was also discussed.

Based on the feedback the commissioners gave in the meeting, Eric Johnson will work with Port staff and the consultants to further refine the mission statement and values. An updated draft of the Port's mission statement and values will be presented to the commission for their consideration in January 2021.

A draft of the Strategic Plan is expected to be completed by early 2021. The draft plan will be shared with Port staff and available for public comment and feedback before it is finalized.

Additional steps in the Strategic Plan process also include development of an Annual Action Plan (detailing the specific actions that will be taken to implement the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan) and a communications plan (with details on how the Strategic Plan will be shared with the public and stakeholders). It is anticipated that the Strategic Plan will be completed by the end of March 2021.



Resolve to fight hunger in 2021

Do you find it hard to keep your New Year's resolutions?

If so, here's a New Year's resolution that's easy to keep and only takes a few hours: "I resolve to help fight hunger in Pierce County in 2021."

One of the best ways to keep that resolution is to join Port and NWSA staff at one or more of the food repack sessions set for 2021 at the Emergency Food Network in Lakewood. The sessions are a great way to give back to the community and get to know your coworkers better.

Each of the 12 sessions take place on Saturdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m.:

Jan. 16	Feb. 6
March 6	April 3
May 1	June 5
July 24	Aug. 21
Sept. 18	Oct. 30
Nov. 20	Dec. 4

All proper COVID protocols and social distancing requirements are followed in these sessions. For more information, or to sign up, please contact [Trisha Perez](#).

Connections

Editor: Rod Koon

Photography: Joe Barrentine and Rod Koon

Special Thanks: Trisha Perez

April is target completion date

It's full speed ahead on our Strategic Plan work

We've made a lot of progress on developing a new Port Strategic Plan since we started working on it in early 2020.

Here's a recap of what we've accomplished so far in our Strategic Plan work, and what remains to be done.

In early April 2020, we held three Strategic Plan virtual workshops so employees and commissioners could share their ideas and suggestions about the Port's future direction and priorities.

Last July, we launched an Online Open House website to educate people about the Port and get feedback from residents about our Strategic Plan effort.

To date, nearly 4,000 people have visited the site to learn more about the Port and our planning efforts.

In addition, more than 450 people have taken our online Strategic Plan survey.

Our community outreach efforts have also included about 50 presentations by commissioners and staff to various groups and organizations—reaching about 2,500 people.

The feedback, suggestions and ideas received throughout this process have been very helpful to the Port commissioners, staff and consultants in developing the various components of the plan.

The draft Strategic Plan will include strategies for supporting our Port's five foundational goals:

- Economic Vitality
- Organizational Success
- Environmental Stewardship
- Transportation Advocacy
- Community Connections

The commission will review and discuss the draft plan at their Feb. 18 meeting. Once they give their feedback on it, the updated plan will be made available for public comment.



Based on the feedback we receive on the draft document, we will update the document so the Port commission can review a revised draft of the Strategic Plan at their March 18 meeting.

The final step in the process will be asking the Port commission to adopt the final version of the plan at their April 15 meeting.

And, of course, once the plan is adopted by the Port commission, then our implementation work begins!

6 tips for achieving better work-life balance

With so many of us working from home for the last few months, the boundaries between work and life can grow very murky.

As we move into 2021, here are some tips on taking a good look at how you work, how you spend your downtime and how you might be able to make some healthy adjustments.

1. Don't wait to take time off

COVID-19-related travel limitations can be a real downer on vacation plans,



but that doesn't mean you should give up your time off just because you can't go where you'd like.

Staycation, anyone? What matters is that you take a real break from work.

2. Manage Zoom fatigue

With more people using Zoom than ever before for meetings and classes — and even socializing — that can not be safely held in person, Zoom fatigue may set in. Take breaks to get outside, away from your computer in between meetings and calls.

3. Set work-from-home boundaries

While working from home has many advantages, it can also allow work to carry over into your downtime if you're not careful. If you're working from home, it's important to set boundaries. This can include setting working hours and then leaving your desk or shutting your computer at the end of the day just like you would at work.

4. Connect with others

Working from home during a pandemic

can begin to feel incredibly isolating. Though you may not be able to get together with friends like you used to, arrange to call, video or text with good friends throughout the day, or at scheduled intervals for longer socializing.

5. Include exercise

Don't forget about your body as you spend more and more time indoors. If you're sitting more than before, this has a negative impact on posture and health in general.

Make sure you get some form of exercise, from simple walking to heart-pumping cardio, as many days of the week as you can.

6. Delegate

Depending on the demands of your job, if you have the opportunity to delegate work, Fast Company recommends you take it. There's no benefit to burning yourself out by doing everything yourself when you could ask others to help.

Read more details about these tips [here](#).

CONNECTIONS May 2021



Our Port achieved a major milestone on April 15 when the Port Commission unanimously adopted our new Strategic Plan.

As Executive Director Eric Johnson said recently, with a nod to the “A” Team, “I love it when a plan comes together.”

The plan, which has been a top priority for Johnson and the Commission over the last year, was more than a year in the making.

Now that the plan has been adopted, it's time for *Operation Implementation*. Over the next few weeks, many staff members will be working to develop the Implementation Plan and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) we'll use to track our progress on the plan. Erin Galeno has the lead on coordinating the implementation work of the Strategic Plan

Read more about details about the plan on [our website](#).

NOTE: In May 2021, we shifted our Port employee newsletter to a digital-only publication using the Microsoft Sway presentation program.

We featured our Strategic Plan as the “top story” in this issue (shown above).

Here's a link to the full version of that newsletter:

<https://sway.office.com/2XcuvJ4saGFROAVL?ref=Link>