

Workforce Recovery Planning

Puget Sound Regional Council

Presentation to Central Puget Sound Economic Development District Board

July 2021



Project Overview and Goals

- The central Puget Sound region over the past decade has experienced a period of sustained economic growth.
- The impacts of COVID-19 have underscored that growth and opportunity for all Puget Sound residents has not been equally available.
- This project will result in customized regional occupational projections to identify high-demand industries.
- It will include data products and outreach strategies that can help connect workers and job seekers in the central Puget Sound region to employment and training programs aligned with higher-wage, in-demand occupations.



About MEF and FWC

- MEF Associates is a small social policy research firm
 - Offices in Downtown Seattle and Alexandria, Virginia
 - Policy research for a mix of federal, state, local, and non-profit clients
- Forland Wheeler Consulting
 - Small business specializing in labor market research and workforce development
 - Led by two former Washington State Employment Security Department managers



About MEF Associates and FWC



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Project Workplan

- **Task 1: Stakeholder engagement**

- Occurs ongoing, beginning this Summer

- **Task 2: Data analysis**

- Begins this Summer
- Finalized analysis Fall

- **Task 3: Outreach Strategies**

- Winter

- **Final Report**

- Final report describing regional industry and occupation analysis and outreach strategies February 2022

**Project schedule aligns with scheduled EDD meetings.
MEF team and PSRC will provide regular updates on progress.**



Our Approach to Equity

- **Task 1: Stakeholder engagement**

- Actively include voices from underrepresented communities
- Engage with stakeholders on issues around equity

- **Task 2: Data analysis**

- Incorporate data that can support an equity lens
- Examine potential differences and identify disparities

- **Task 3: Outreach Strategies**

- Create explicit strategies for historically marginalized groups
- Engage community-based organizations to vet strategies and disseminate information
- Develop recognition and responsibility of employers and workforce programs in increasing equity



Puget Sound Regional Economy

- Total Population: 4.3 million
- Labor Force: 2.5 million
- Employment: 2.4 million
- Unemployed: 130k
- Unemployment Rate: 5.2%



Industry Sectors of Focus

- Construction: 107k jobs
 - Employment down from recent peak, but on rise
- Manufacturing: 160k jobs
 - Strong employment history, but recent decreases
- Information: 134k jobs
 - Strong employment and large number of job postings
- Healthcare: 253k jobs
 - Strong employment and large number of job postings



Stakeholder Engagement

Goals

1. Develop a **regional** perspective on workforce development and recovery strategies
2. Identify practices and strategies to support decision making on connections to labor markets and finding and building talent

Planned Regional Stakeholders

- Industry Sectors of Focus
- Workforce Development Councils
- Community and Technical Colleges
- Job Seekers





Questions?