



City Council

Approval of a Resolution Authorizing an Agreement with the Thurston Chamber of Commerce for the Olympia Workforce Training Center

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Title

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Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The project was presented and discussed at the March 16, 2022 Finance Committee and was unanimously recommended to advance to Council for action.

City Manager Recommendation:

Approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce for the Olympia Workforce Training Center.

Report

Issue:

Whether to Approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce for the Olympia Workforce Training Center: an initiative aimed at providing quality skill-up training for workers displaced by COVID-related impacts.

Staff Contact:

Mike Reid, Economic Development Director, 360.753.8591

Presenter(s):

Mike Reid, Economic Development Director
David Schaffert, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce

Background and Analysis:

As part of the City of Olympia's commitment to continued support of the ThurstonStrong Regional Economic Recovery effort, staff have worked with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce to develop a scope of work for a temporary Workforce Training Center. The work of the center would be aimed at creating better access to career pathway programs and certified training programs allowing

Olympia residents access to higher wage jobs and Olympia based businesses access to the workforce they need.

The Olympia Workforce Training Center will provide quality skill-up training for workers displaced by COVID-related impacts who desire to learn skills that local industries require of their workforce. Individuals will have an opportunity for paid work-based learning, future employees are adequately trained, and Olympia businesses have the workforce pipeline to hire from. The Training Center will also host and/or facilitate trainings specific to the needs of area business and workers.

One area of significant identified need is in the development of workforce for the construction trades. The greater Olympia region is experiencing a housing crisis due to multiple causes, but one addressable barrier is a lack of skilled laborers in the construction trades. The Olympia Training Center would incorporate the construction trade pre-apprentice program called Construction Corps. The Construction Corps model provides a 4-week industry recognized short-term training with stackable certifications that is designed to provide a pathway and agency for individuals to embark on their path to employment in the construction industry.

Additionally, it is anticipated that the Olympia Training Center would work in concert with Pacific Mountain Workforce Development's Journey2Jobs program. The Journey2Jobs program is a workforce development effort focused on unhoused members of our communities that was funded by Olympia City Council on March 1, 2022.

The contemplated scope of work for the Olympia Training Center would be for 18 months of operation and would target the following deliverables:

- 1000 City of Olympia residents are outreached and oriented to the training center.
- 520 City of Olympia residents attend weekly Career Map Meetups where they will receive peer and Champion Network support for career navigation.
- 240 City of Olympia residents attend monthly Champion Networking events where they will be connected to Olympia businesses for employment and/or work experience.
- 110 City of Olympia residents receive job readiness training, including resume development and interview skills.
- 65 City of Olympia residents receive construction related industry recognized credentials and employment and/or work experience placement.
- 15 City of Olympia businesses/employees receive customer service and/or de-escalation training.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

This effort has roots in two existing planning documents of the City of Olympia, the Comprehensive Plan and the One Community Plan both of which had deep community involvement in their creation.

In the Economy chapter of the Comprehensive Plan item GE6 "Collaboration with other partners maximizes economic opportunity" and PE6.5 "Collaborate with local economic development organizations to create and maintain existing living-wage jobs".

The One Community Plan has two areas of connection:

1.7 Prioritize pathways to economic opportunity that help people find longer-term security.

b. Coordinate with Workforce Council, Chambers, Colleges and other partners that can help connect people to training and/or employment.

2.4 Increase education, training and resources that help people avoid or recover from homelessness.

e. Promote the availability of increased access to college education and technical certification training programs that lead to higher-wage occupations.

Options:

1. Approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement with Thurston County Chamber for the Olympia Workforce Training Center.
2. Do not Approve a Resolution authorizing an agreement with Thurston County Chamber for the Olympia Workforce Training Center.
3. Consider the Resolution authorizing an agreement with Thurston County Chamber for the Olympia Workforce Training Center at another time.

Financial Impact:

As a part of the Economic Recovery package approved by Council on May 4, 2021, a commitment of \$1.375m for future ThurstonStrong efforts was made. The Olympia Workforce Training Center would utilize \$575,000 of that funding. The funding for this project comes from the Economic Development Reserves.

Attachments:

Resolution
Agreement