

Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative/Ferry Service

The Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative™ is a regional cluster-based economic development strategy with the goals of creating more good jobs closer to home, reducing congestion and emissions, and making communities more vibrant. There are five target industries: Advanced Manufacturing, Biosciences, Agriscience & Specialty Foods, Transportation Technologies, and Clean Tech.

The Initiative is a collaboration between the County and seven partner cities, who work together on diverse actions to enhance the economic vitality of the region. The eight partners have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to implement the Initiative as a team. The Initiative has been formalized in a Strategic Action Plan, adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 2019.

An annual allocation of \$500,000 was requested to implement the Strategic Action Plan. The slate of example actions below is aligned with the Strategic Action Plan and illustrate a potential preliminary work plan that would require approximately \$500,000 (some actions would take up to two years to complete; new actions would be launched with subsequent funding while these actions were completed). Cultivating new industries as part of a broader strategy to retain and expand the County's jobs base during the transition away from fossil fuels will be a key priority for this work for many years to come.

- Acquire and compile current post-pandemic business data with industry trends and impacts (countywide);
- Complete market research, economic feasibility, and business plan for establishing a bioscience incubator, on a County-owned site in Hercules, to further stimulate commercialization within the region's bioscience cluster;
- Develop a regional Northern Waterfront target industry-oriented marketing program-including unified website, branding, and collateral;
- Support advance transportation technology cluster support at one or both of two sites in the Northern Waterfront area to foster an environment that can retain and attract such businesses in future regional development: GoMentum Station (privately owned vehicle technology testing site) on the Concord Naval Weapons Station and Buchanan Airport (publicly owned commercial airport with aviation technology space available);
- Implement and/or expand on the findings of the Water Emergency Transport Agency Strategic Business Plan/Feasibility Study as they relate to ferry service along the Northern Waterfront corridor.

The District V Supervisor strongly supports this initiative.

The Northern Waterfront Initiative (now called the Just Transition Economic Revitalization Plan Project) is currently included at \$750,000 in the list of Community Project Funding requests for inclusion in the federal fiscal year 2022 appropriations bills. Although not yet approved by Congress, the project has the support of Congressman DeSaulnier and the Appropriations Committee in the House of Representatives.

Recommendation

In anticipation of receiving federal funding combined with the limited resources of Measure X funds, no Measure X funds are recommended at this time.