

Washington Public Ports Association

JOB DESCRIPTION

Director of Transportation and Economic Development Policy

Classification: Exempt

Reports to: WPPA Executive Director

Date: October 15, 2025

Job Summary:

The role of the Director of Transportation and Economic Development is to maximize the opportunity for Washington's public port districts to strategically serve their communities as developers of transportation projects, as creative economic development leaders, and as conveners of the state's trade-driven economy. There is strong competition for funding critical transportation projects, the clear need for expanded political support for our trade sectors, and room for creativity in the way ports provide economic opportunity in their communities. This role is essential to maintaining Washington ports as leaders in the above-referenced fields, and for this person to be a highly recognized and influential expert in these fields as they undertake this role for WPPA.

WPPA is a nonprofit trade association that represents seventy-five public port districts that drive economic development in communities around our state. Our members operate a wide array of facilities, from international container terminals to small community marinas. They are united by their role as economic drivers in every community they serve – and by the creativity with which they approach their statutorily-directed role in the state's economy. For our members, we act as their lead advocate in Olympia, as an educational entity providing relevant trainings and policy briefs for members, and as a convener of ports and a communicator of the good work of ports.

Essential Functions:

The Washington Public Ports Association's Director of Transportation and Economic Development:

- Is the association's primary policy lead on all issues related to transportation, aviation, trade, economic development, and tax policy
- Is the primary liaison to state and federal transportation agencies and other agencies relevant to the policy portfolio described above, including the Washington State Department Transportation, Department of Commerce, the Department of Revenue, and more
- Staffs the association's Trade and Transportation Committee; Aviation Committee; and Economic Development Committees
- Provides staff support to various working groups that cross into the policy areas referenced (i.e. Energy Supply and Grid Reliability Work Group, issue-dependent)
- Acts as the association's primary legislative lead on transportation, aviation, trade, economic development, and tax policy. Develops, implements, and executes legislative strategies that advance these issues to the shared benefit of WPPA members.
- Is the primary liaison with stakeholder groups representing the issues within the portfolio, including but not limited to: trucking and railroad companies and trade associations; aviation-related trade

associations; economic development partners such as Associate Development Organizations and the Washington Economic Development Association, and more;

- Works with Executive Director and other WPPA staff as a key part of planning and managing association meetings and seminars.
- Maintains a pro-active awareness of local, state, and federal transportation, aviation, trade, economic development, and tax policy issues– with an eye on opportunities and threats – as they relate to Washington ports.
- Regularly communicates with member ports to: understand their potential opportunities or obstacles in each issue areas; informs and educates them on opportunities and how to be successful players, including through regular communication with Standing Committee members;
- Develops a communication strategy in each issue area to foster and ensure engagement with a variety of stakeholders;
- Develops recommendations for the Executive Director and the Executive Committee on policy questions that arise in the policy portfolio described.

Competencies:

- Must be recognized and respected for their personal and business ethics.
- Must be curious and informed about matters related to trade and transportation and creative in recommending ways Washington ports can make best use of potential opportunities. Must be a respected and influential subject expert.
- Must have or be able to quickly acquire broad port and general business knowledge and wisdom including a strong understanding of the external environment (competitors, global market, etc.).
- Must be a team player who actively shares their trade, transportation, and economic development knowledge with other port staff and member ports.
- Must have excellent verbal and written communications skills and a professional/personal style that allows them to maintain respected and influential relationships with elected officials.

Supervisory:

All association staff report directly to the Executive Director. Functionally, given the small nature of the WPPA team, they may take direction from, and give direction to, staff colleagues on projects.

As a member of the legislative team, this position will also take direction directly from the staff member designated as lead on the WPPA Legislative Committee.

Work Environment:

This position primarily works indoors in a normal office setting where there is no physical discomfort due to temperature, dust, noise and the like. May travel outdoors to other ports and to and from different legislative offices.

Because of WPPA's mission and role in government affairs, it is essential that WPPA employees understand the sensitive nature of their employment and conduct themselves accordingly. All employees must not engage in any activity which could be characterized as lobbying unless it is part of their duties as an employee of WPPA.

Expected Hours of Work:

Regular office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. while the Washington State Legislature is in session, with the expectation that the hours during legislative session be sufficient to cover the work required of this position.

and 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. during the remainder of the year. Occasional evening and weekend work may be required as job duties demand.

Travel:

This position will require travel, including some out-of-area and overnight travel that is tied to member service in their home districts, and to conference attendance.

Required Education and Experience:

- Completion of related BA or BS degree from an accredited college or university.
- Five to seven years of transportation policy, economic development policy, and other related experience.

Preferred Education and Experience:

- Completion of a BA or BS degree plus a Master's degree.
- Four or more years of port/public sector and legislative relations experience.

Other Duties:

Manage or participate in carrying out tasks related to meetings, workshops, training events and conferences.

Please note this job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job.

Nothing in this job description restricts management's right to assign or reassign duties, responsibilities and activities to this job at any time with or without notice.

Necessary Special Requirements

Ability to handle physical requirements of the position. Valid Washington State driver's license.

Salary and benefits

Salary range is \$9,000 - \$11,500 per month (\$108,000-\$138,000 per year), DOQ. This position includes a full benefit package including medical and dental insurance, retirement contribution, paid vacation, and medical leave time.

Opening and closing dates

Position will remain open until January 31, 2026

Application materials

Please send a resumé and cover letter, describing your interest and qualifications, to:

washington.ports@washingtonports.org

Washington Public Ports Association is an Equal Opportunity Employer.