COMMISSION AGENDA   **Item No.**   7b

                                  Date of Meeting   January 10, 2012

DATE: January 4, 2012

TO: Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Patricia Akiyama, Director, Public Affairs
                Jane Kilburn, Director, International Tourism
                Nancy Blanton, Manager, Business and Corporate Communications

SUBJECT: Briefing: Port of Seattle's Internet Site

BACKGROUND:

The Port of Seattle's website serves nearly 6,000 visitors per day, including travelers and customers at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, air and marine cargo customers, cruise passengers, recreational boaters who use port-operated marinas, real estate customers and tenants, waterfront park visitors, community members who view commission meetings and documents, and many more. The website had not been fully redesigned and updated since 2003, yet technology has changed at a rapid pace.

A redesign of the site was planned as early as 2008, but because of economic considerations, the project was postponed. The complete redesign the Port of Seattle's public Internet site began in December 2010, with the overarching goal of improving service to our community and customers by providing the ease of use and newer technologies they had come to expect. The project goals were to:

- Replace aging and broken systems with a collaborative and interactive platform
- Update the information architecture and design to incorporate the port's new brand identity
- Address the changed organizational structure and new business directions
- Ensure the website's architecture meets the needs of the port's primary audiences

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Primarily a collaboration between the Information, Communication and Technology Department (ICT) and Public Affairs, the project engaged many departments across the organization as well as a technology and design consultant. After defining requirements for the new website based on defined goals, audience personas, and the needs of public-facing business units, we engaged port

staff in a broad-based cleanup – reducing our website content by about 50 percent to ensure a leaner more up-to-date and efficient website.

First, ICT researched the options and selected the new platform on which to build our new site, SharePoint 2010, which would provide the design latitude needed while allowing greater participation of employees in maintaining specific sections of the website without requiring a lot of technical expertise.

Second, we worked closely with our consultant Blue Rooster to refine our site architecture in a way that we believed would be more intuitive for the people visiting our site, and organized all information to flow from three simple navigation options:

- Travel & Recreation
- Business with the Port
- About the Port

Large drop-down menus make the content of each section clear and easy to access. We also incorporated Port of Seattle colors and graphic icons to help communicate our brand identity. For example, many of the icons are green, reflecting the green bar in the port's logo and our commitment to environmental stewardship as a constant thread throughout all we do.

Our organizational structure had changed since the previous website was created. In addition to the Aviation and Seaport operating divisions, Real Estate and Capital Development divisions have been created. Real Estate properties now have clear and easy-to-find listings under the Business heading, right next to the contracting and construction project listings. These sections also link to feature stories that describe the projects underway.

Project leaders and team members kept our audience in mind throughout the site development. For example, to ensure transparency and ease of use, the Commission pages are improved to provide tables and tabs allowing viewers to quickly access what they need. All agendas and memos for specific meetings are a click away, and all supporting documents for agenda items are linked within the agendas and memos. Live streaming of Commission meetings is available on the Commission page, and after the meetings the videos are categorized and linked from the same tab box.

In addition, the new site incorporates social media on various pages, allowing our audience to keep up with port events and business activities on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube via their computer and mobile devices.

RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS:

Prior to launching it to the public, the new website was made available to all port employees for preview and feedback. The site was officially launched on November 14, 2011.

In the first month following launch the website tracked 209,823 visits, and 688,217 page views, which is consistent with previous numbers. We have received positive feedback from viewers regarding the new look, the use of slide shows and video, and the ease of navigation. We will continue to track activity on our pages and video to note trends and make continuous improvements.

In January 2012, the project will continue with training for designated members of the public-facing departments so that they can maintain their own content on the site and keep information fresh for our viewers. Those members will be part of an ongoing collaborative team.

OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS BRIEFING:

PowerPoint presentation.