



**COMMISSION  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 8i

**ACTION ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** January 25, 2022

**DATE:** 12/31/2021

**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

**FROM:** Dave McFadden, Managing Director, Economic Development Division  
Gail Muller, Tourism Development Department

**SUBJECT: 2022 Tourism Marketing Support Program (TMSP)**

**Amount of this request:** \$200,000

**Total estimated project cost:** \$200,000

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

Request Commission authorization of the 2022 Tourism marketing grant program (TMSP) and authority for the Executive Director to approve execution for all related contract agreements for the 2022 selected Tourism Marketing Support Program recipients in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 2022 Tourism Marketing Support Program will be in its seventh year. It has been an impactful, collaborative, and mutually beneficial program for the Port of Seattle, destination marketing organizations (dmos) and other nonprofit organizations. For 2022, \$200,000 has been approved for the program. The source of funds is the Port property tax levy.

The Port of Seattle's co-operative tourism marketing support program boosts the economic value of tourism across the state. This program has been effective in promoting Washington State and the use of Port facilities. The program is intended to provide matching support of up to \$10,000 to non-profit destination marketing organizations (DMO's), attractions, cities, counties, and chambers of commerce which can effectively market their destination to non-resident visitors traveling to our state. As the Port's agreement with Washington Tourism Alliance continues through the end of April 2022 to address statewide tourism recovery efforts, Tourism Development will select grant applicants who can leverage and increase the effectiveness of both organizations' marketing activities and positively impact the state's tourism economy.

The grant funds are used for advertising, publicizing, promoting events or conducting research to attract visitors. Marketing efforts for the Tourism Marketing Support Program include promoting our natural scenic beauty, outdoor recreation, cultural attractions, online digital marketing campaigns, promotion of Washington's growing wine and craft brewery industry, and networking with tour operators and travel media.

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Since the program's inception over \$1,650,000 in tourism marketing investments have been made to market Washington State destinations and Port travel gateways.

As part of the Port's efforts to address equity, diversity and inclusion, Tourism Development will earmark \$50,000 specifically for BIPOC travel audience, organizations, attractions, and events for the 2022 program.

Marketing, promotion, and outreach plans include:

- Communicating to a data base of over 270 different organizations via email. The data base includes a roster of over 130 cities, chambers, and destination organizations, 24 cultural and ethnic attractions, 17 outdoor recreational organizations and 35 tribal contacts.
- Prominent positioning of the grant program application process information, together with video testimonials from previous recipients, will be available on the Tourism Development section of the Port's external website.
- Conducting a virtual Information Session on February 4, 2022. The session is open to all registered attendees.
- Speaking at various organization meetings such as the Washington Tourism Alliance, one-on-one meetings with destination marketing organizations, chambers, city officials, and nonprofit organizations.
- Direct contact via phone and email. Drawing from past emails and our data base of contacts over the course of the year, calls will continue to be made to potential applicants encouraging their participation.

### **Tourism Marketing Support Recipients**

The Port of Seattle is advancing tourism in Washington State by implementing an annual partnership program with local destination marketing organizations. Within the last six years of the program 243 applications have been received and 131 projects were awarded, netting over \$1,650,000 in additional marketing promotional efforts for Washington tourism. The matching funds program promotes use of Port facilities and tourism growth throughout the state.

In 2021, \$200,000 was authorized for the program. Staff reviewed the applications, and 23 recipients were awarded in 2021. Due to COVID impacts, two awarded organizations cancelled and some of the remaining organizations adjusted the elements of their projects and modified timing of the marketing to better coincide with consumer interest and decisions to travel. Whether canceling or modifying their programs, due to COVID impacts, all the awarded organizations have expressed their sincere appreciation during this challenging time.

The tourism grant projects that were implemented focused on impacting travelers via online media efforts, development of videos and in some cases, collateral production. Digital media activities encompass a variety of online marketing efforts that include establishing a visitor focused travel website, targeted banner website or social media advertising, development of a

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mobile user site or app, or creating a unique traveler landing page. The results or benefits include generating additional travel awareness, interest and positively impacting Washington State economic development and tourism.

**2021 Awarded Recipients**

Organization Name	POS Awarded Amount	Summary of Proposed Project
Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce	\$6,000	County-wide social media marketing, targeting out-of-state markets, focusing on diversity and recreation.
Alliance for Pioneer Square	\$7,500	Creating a destination marketing piece (map & guide) for online and for visitors at SEA Airport
Forks Chamber of Commerce	\$10,000	Social media marketing for destination outdoor activities, Quileute Tribe and Makah Tribe attractions, and festival event
MOHAI	\$10,000	Digital marketing campaign including advertising to AR, CA, CO target markets and social media marketing efforts
Seattle Architectural Foundation	\$10,000	Online advertising campaign, including website redesign, social media, and banner ads. Target markets: NY, San Francisco, Chicago.
San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau	\$10,000	Film production for media broadcast. Spanish speaking version included. Emphasis on environmental stewardship, activities, Native American heritage
City of Renton	\$10,000	Digital marketing and social media campaign. Graphics and website refresh will highlight minority-owned businesses, sample travel itineraries, and more. Target markets: TX, CA

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Visit Walla Walla	\$10,000	Social media marketing campaign, including three media influencers from CA, TX, MO. Focus on BIPOC travelers.
Skamania County Chamber of Commerce	\$5,332	Create multi-day itineraries to include in the "Experience Skamania" visitor guide, focused on adventure/nature tourism and cruising from POS cruise terminals, for online, hotels, and mailed distribution
Tacoma Regional Convention & Visitor Bureau	\$10,000	Eco-adventure itinerary marketing campaign to out-of-state audiences, social media influencer marketing, and geo-location digital marketing.
Global to Local	\$10,000	Develop website, social media campaign focused on BIPOC "foodie" community, targeting out-of-state markets in CA and TX.
Ballard Alliance	\$10,000	Media familiarization and social media target marketing campaign. Focus on inclusion of diverse cultural experiences
City of Westport	\$10,000	Marketing advertising and social media campaign, target out-of-state fishers from CO, MT, WY
Visit Bainbridge Island	\$10,000	Marketing strategy includes print and digital advertising, social media, and website integration updates for target out-of-state promotional efforts
Savor Central Washington	\$8,600	Strategic social media, online and print advertising campaign, targeting several CA markets.
Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce	\$8,000	Target markets: NY, AR, CA, IL, FL for online and social media marketing campaign, including video production, advertising, and new website landing page

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<p><b>Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce</b></p>	<p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Website development and online media campaign, focused on promotion of "foodie" loop extension through WA wine country, support to native-owned businesses and highlighting sustainable outdoor recreation. Market targets: CO, NM, CA, TX</p>
<p><b>Cascade Loop Association</b></p>	<p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Develop a visual asset library for social media marketing and promotional efforts, targeting key air traffic markets</p>
<p><b>Coupeville Chamber of Commerce</b></p>	<p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Create online and print marketing, digital and social media campaigns, create website videos and itineraries for out-of-state travelers. Target markets: CO, AR, CA</p>
<p><b>City of North Bend</b></p>	<p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Online advertising and social media marketing campaign, highlighting adventure outdoor recreation, art, and culture.</p>
<p><b>Acoustic Sound Wintergrass</b></p>	<p>\$8,000</p>	<p>Strategic online, print, radio, TV, and social media marketing advertising for event promotion to target audiences from CA, TN, and other out-of-state cities. Focus on BIPOC outreach and inclusion</p>

**Schedule**

Proposed Implementation Timeline

- January 26, 2022: Launch Tourism Marketing Support Program application process and announce program via CPO’s Vendor Connect, Tourism’s website and email communications
- January 26, 2022 – February 23, 2022: Continue outreach marketing and promotional communication efforts to obtain applicants
- February 4, 2022 and February 10, 2022: Information Sessions for registered potential applicants
- February 23, 2022: Deadline for application submittals
- March 14, 2022: Review Committee identifies awardees
- March 14-15, 2022: Staff notifies 2022 recipients and non-recipients

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- March 14, 2022 – April 2022: Work with CPO to execute 2022 awarded agreements
- April/May 2022 – December 31, 2022: Recipients implement and report on contract scope of work and metrics

**ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED**

**Alternative 1** – Do not provide the Tourism Marketing Support Program for 2022.

Cost Implications: \$0.

Pros:

- (1) Reduces specific budget request by \$200,000 for 2022.

Cons:

- (1) Elimination of the program would impact small tourism organizations and industry partners whose marketing and promotion budgets have been dramatically impacted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- (2) Because the TMSP program focus is to increase air traffic through SEA International Airport as a primary gateway for all of Washington state, the cancellation of the program will negatively affect leisure travel during the important industry recovery of tourism in 2022 and beyond.

This is not the recommended alternative.

**Alternative 2** – Offer the TMSP Program for 2022

Cost Implications: \$200,000

Pros:

- (1) The TMSP program assists and demonstrates the Port of Seattle’s intention to work with a diverse range of organizations and industry partners.
- (2) Because the TMSP program requires a two-to-one matching contribution, the \$200,000 positively impacts tourism and visitor marketing throughout Washington State with a minimum of \$300,000 in total marketing promotional efforts. In previous years the actual match fund levels exceeded the two-to-one match requirement.
- (3) This program will positively affect leisure travel by increasing non-resident visitor arrivals via SEA International Airport.

Cons:

- (1) Timing due to COVID impacts on travel.

This is the recommended alternative.

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST**

- (1) Presentation Slides

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

December 15, 2020 - Commission approved authorization for the 2021 Tourism Marketing grant Program and authority for the Executive Director to approve execution for all related contract agreements.

December 10, 2019 - Commission approved authorization for the 2020 Tourism Marketing grant Program and authority for the Executive Director to approve execution for all related contract agreements.

July 23, 2019 – Commission briefed on 2019 Tourism Marketing Support Program awardees.

December 11, 2018 – Commission approved authorization for the 2019 Tourism Marketing grant Program and authority for the Executive Director to approve execution for all related contract agreements.

October 12, 2018 – Update on the 2018 program, results, and recommendations for improving the program in 2019.

July 23, 2019 – Marketing support program awardees were briefed to the commission.

January 30, 2018 – The Commission was briefed on the results of the 2017 program.

April 11, 2017 – 2017 Marketing support program awardees were announced.

January 17, 2017 – The Commission was briefed on the results of the 2016 program.

November 22, 2016 – The Commission approved the final 2017 budget, including \$150,000 for the Tourism Marketing Support program.