

# Tourism Development

## Tourism Marketing Support Program Reauthorization

Item No. 10b supp

Meeting Date: January 27, 2026



# Tourism Marketing Support Program

The TMSP grant program advances the mission of the Port's larger tourism development strategy by providing local partners with key funding to help drive responsible visitation to our region.

Each proposed project is evaluated by an internal panel for its destination stewardship, environmental, and equity impact.

Today, we are requesting re-authorization of the program – at the same funding level as the previous cycle - for up to \$600k for 2026/27.





# Impact of Travel to Washington

Tourism is not just about “heads in beds” or visitor spending—it’s about local jobs, small business survival, and community vibrancy.

Tax revenues generated help fund infrastructure, civic amenities, public services, the arts, and more.

Tourism delivers jobs for our families, aids cultural preservation, promotes sustainable practices, and tourism is integral to community well-being and future prosperity



Visitor Spending  
\$25.1 Billion



Tax Revenues  
\$3.4 Billion



Total Jobs Supported  
232,500

*2024 – US Travel Assoc.*

# How Tourism Marketing Supports Locals

## **1. Combats Negative or Outdated Perceptions**

Reframes Seattle's story through trusted media and firsthand experiences to further efforts in restoring visitor confidence, especially in international markets.

## **2. Keeps Our Region Top-of-Mind Amid Intense Global Competition**

US Destinations are facing growing anti-US sentiment which has increased competition for attracting high-value visitors who stay longer and spend more.

## **3. Advances more Equitable Visitor Spending**

Directs visitors beyond downtown and peak seasons helping spread economic benefits to neighborhoods, rural areas, and small businesses.

## **4. Addresses Community Concerns About Impact**

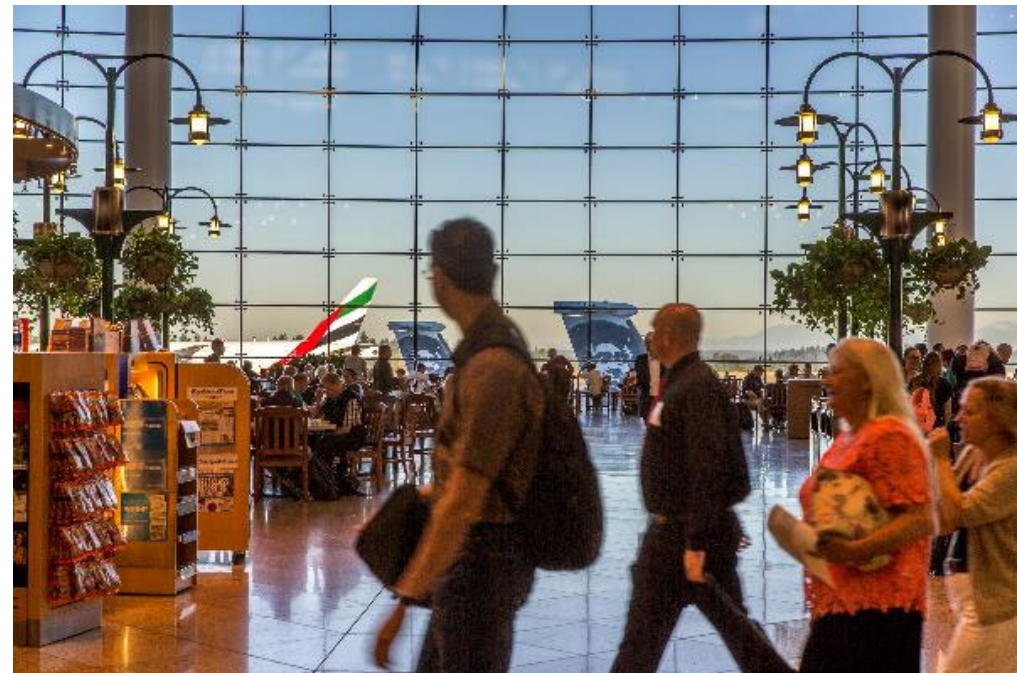
Uses responsible tourism messaging to set expectations, reduce overcrowding, protect natural assets, and respect local culture.

## **5. Reduces Economic Uncertainty & Volatility**

Builds resilience by diversifying markets and visitor segments, helping stabilize jobs, businesses, and public revenue.

# Tourism Development: The Big Picture

- Partnership w/ SWT and Visit Seattle
- Create resiliency in Seattle's tourism pipeline
- Share success and deliver value to local businesses through leadership and opportunity
- Amplify community voices and drive visitation when/where it is needed most.
- Embrace best practices for destination stewardship



# Tourism Development - 2025 Highlights

*The TMSP complements and bolsters the larger scope of the Port's tourism work*

- Korean Product Developer Fam
- German HAL Fam
- Edelweiss Media Tour
- Northstar Travel Agent Trainings
- “Destination Pacific Northwest” w/Washington State Wine
- Media value of over \$12 million





# Delivering Value for our Partners

- Responsible Tourism Campaign at SEA
  - Featuring dozens of local partners
- Visitor Information Chatbot
  - Ability to nudge visitors when and where they are needed
- Tourism Marketing Support Program
  - Provides up to \$20k per recipient (up to \$600k total)
  - Focus on responsible, eco-conscious, and equitable projects
  - Two tiers of grants allow smaller, less-visible organizations to participate
  - Upon re-authorization, application window will launch immediately.



# Responsible Travel Principles

•**Shop Local** - Support locally-owned businesses and keep dollars in our community, helping us to maintain Seattle's distinct and authentic personality.

•**Explore Beyond the Typical** - Go off the beaten path and discover the diverse and captivating neighborhoods that make our region so special.

•**Embrace Local Arts & Culture** - Meet locals and seek out authentic cultural experiences to get more out of your trip and gain a deeper understanding of the world.

•**Use Alternative Transportation** - Use public transportation, carpool, or bike whenever possible to reduce your carbon footprint and help prevent overcrowding in popular destinations.

**Avoid Overcrowding** - Book during slower periods, travel at a leisurely pace, and seek out comparable alternatives to popular attractions, shops, and trails.

**Respect the Land** - Washington state is known for its stunning natural beauty. Leave it in a better condition than you found it, packing out everything brought in, properly disposing of waste, and avoiding single-use plastics.

**Support First Nations** - Learn about, experience and respect the cultures and traditions of Washington's Indigenous peoples, who have called this land home for thousands of years.

**Protect Public Lands** - Follow all posted rules and regulations in parks and public lands. Purchase appropriate passes and permits to support vital maintenance and conservation efforts.



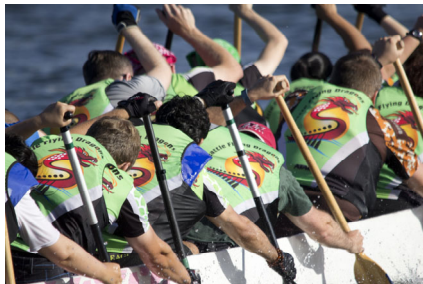
# Tourism Marketing Support Program Evaluation

- Internal five-person panel from across departments
- Evaluation Built to Advance Responsible, Equitable Tourism
  - Overall Impact
  - Inclusivity and Equity Impact
  - Environmental impact
  - Off-season promotion

# Example TMSP Projects and Partners



TRANSFORMATIONAL  
TRAVEL COUNCIL





# Thank you!

