

**CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
2015 LODGING/TOURISM FUND PROPOSAL
COVER SHEET**

Project Name: **Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center**

Name of Applicant Organization: **Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce**

Applicant Organization IRS Chapter 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) status and Tax ID Number:
501 (c) (6) Tax ID Number is 91-0653393

Date of Incorporation as a Washington State Corporation and UBI Number:
Incorporated in Washington State in 1927. UBI # 603-308-198

Primary Contact: **Rex Oliver**

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Number of pages in proposal: **10**

Under the definition of "tourism promotion", which of the following does your proposal include?

Please mark all that apply and how much is requested in each category:

√	Funding Category	Dollar Amount
√	Advertising, publicizing or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists	\$ 6,000.00
√	Developing strategies to expand tourism	\$ 5,560.00
√	Operating tourism promotion agencies	\$ 11,756.00
√	Marketing and operations of special festivals or events	\$ 7,700.00
√	Operation of a tourism-related facility*	\$ 3,801.93

*If the proposal requests funds for operation a tourism-related facility, please indicate the legal owner of that facility:

T&C Northeast LLC.

1. Describe the proposed project.

The proposed program/project is the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center. This incorporates all aspects of advertising, marketing, website management, event promotion, community promotion, and operation of tourism facilities.

As part of our mission the Visitor Information Center's (VIC) first objective is to greet and inform visitors/tourists of the current events and attractions they will find on the island to enhance their visit and make their stay on the island a memorable experience.

The initial task of greeting is done at the kiosk located at the ferry terminal and in the main office of the Chamber on Winslow Way. Well-trained, knowledgeable staff and volunteers are critical to the delivery of consistent and reliable visitor information and customer service. The Chamber is committed to staffing the ferry kiosk with a core of paid staff supported by volunteers. Under the supervision of experienced chamber personnel, the main chamber offices on Winslow Way are staffed with enthusiastic and knowledgeable volunteers dedicated to providing visitors with the same reliable visitor information and quality customer service as is found at the kiosk.

Another key component of the mission is to "Promote the Community" using advertising, marketing and communication to both visitors and agencies that promote tourism on the Seattle side of the water as well as those who come to visit us from around the world.

To this end it is necessary to maintain:

- Membership in Visit Seattle (SCVB)
- Membership in the Washington State Tourism Alliance
- Membership in the North Kitsap Tourism Consortium
- Participation in the Seattle Bike Expo with a booth staffed by the Chamber and some of our many island partner organizations.
- Participation in the Seattle Concierges trade show
- Participation in the 2015 edition of Chinook Book
- Maintaining contact with the Cruise Ship Information Staff

A significant part of the mission to "Promote the Community" is to continue to provide an exceptional web presence. The majority of our visitors/tourists find us on Google, Yahoo, Bing, Opera and others. The Chamber has determined through Google Analytics that this past year our web information is being accessed by over 30% of our viewers using mobile devices. That being said, we have developed two additional micro websites as part of the whole Chamber web presence. The first was developed last year to facilitate the related information for the Grand Old Fourth Of July event. This site was up for only 30 days ahead of the event and generated 8,200 unique visitor sessions and over 20,000 page views. We also learned that in excess of 70% of our visitors to this site used a mobile device. This site is active and starting in January we anticipate many more unique visitor sessions and page views. With the success of the Grand Old Fourth site, we have started the development of an additional special site using the same formula to feature Visitor Information. This website will be found at www.VisitBainbridge.com. This site will further enhance current and relevant information for visitors/tourists including: lodging, dining, shopping, recreational activities, culture, relocation and other related topics.

2/A - Expected impact in increased tourism in 2015

In 2014, to the end of September, we have seen an increase of 13% in the number of visitors/tourists we greeted and counted at both the Kiosk at the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. Our visitors/tourists come from all 50 States, all Provinces of Canada and over 40 countries from around the world. Visit Seattle has indicated a 2.9% increase in overnight visitors and a 5% increase projected for 2015 in hotel room bookings. The biggest challenge for Seattle right now is the need for more hotel rooms. There are over 2,000 rooms scheduled to be built in Seattle over the next 5 years. Tourism in this region will have a steady growth for the next several years, and Bainbridge by association will reap the benefits of that growth.

2/B - Expected impact on or increase in overnight stays on the island.

The Chamber, in partnership with the Downtown Association and the Lodging Association is working on promoting or creating events or activities which will increase overnight stays on Bainbridge. A planned Culinary Event for October of 2015, in which the Chamber will partner with the Downtown Association and Intentional Table will greatly enhance visitors/tourists overnight stays during that event. Events such as the Chilly Hilly, Mocha Tsuki Celebration and the Quilt Festival are popular during the off season. During the high season, lodging on the island is at or near maximum capacity. We need additional events and activities in the off season to increase overnight stays.

2/C – Projected economic impact on Bainbridge island businesses.

According to Visit Seattle, tourism in the King County region, from which we benefit, \$6 Billion was spent by almost 20 million overnight visitors. 8% of those visitors/tourists were International visitors/tourists. According to the National Travel & Tourism Office of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Travel and Tourism in the US in 2013 was a \$1.5 trillion industry. There were 8 million people employed in the industry and tourism accounted for 2.8% of the national GDP. There were 69.8 million international visitors who spent \$180.7 billion. Based on these statistics we have received from Visit Seattle and the National Travel & Tourism Office, it is reasonable to expect an 11 to 14% increase in visitors/tourists in 2015.

2/D – The project's potential to draw visitors to the island and increase overnight stays.

The Chamber's partnerships with groups on the island that lead to the promotion of their shoulder season events, helps to secure their success. Working with groups such as the Quilt Guild to promote their fall event, and working with the Downtown Association in the creation of the culinary event are examples by which overnight stays are increased due to promotion. The Culinary event will be a multi-day event thereby ensuring the attendance of many visitors/tourists of who will choose to stay overnight on the island.

2/E – The applicant's demonstrated history of organizational and project success.

The Chamber of Commerce has been welcoming visitors/tourists to the Island for 87 years. Dedicated staff and volunteers who take pride in their island have demonstrated year after year the ability to provide accurate, up to date relevant information on behalf of the businesses and services on the island. Working with many organizations on the island, the Chamber has proven to be a willing partner. Keeping up to date with the latest technology and marketing trends has demonstrated our ability to be current and relevant.

A more recent development is the introduction of BI Ride by Kitsap Transit. This is a direct result of the creation of the Froghopper by the Chamber in the 2013 LTAC funding cycle. The creation of The Grand Old Fourth web site is another example of a great success leading to the development of another program, the new VisitBainbridge.com web site.

2/F – Describe any partnerships with other organizations in the proposed project.

The Chamber is proud to have many partnerships with organizations on the island. The Bainbridge Downtown Association, the Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council are some of the largest groups. The Chamber actively distributes brochures and information for each of these groups to the many visitors/tourists to the island. The Chamber is also pleased to partner with other organizations on the island such as

Bloedel Reserve, Squeaky Wheels, KiDiMu, The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, the Bainbridge Island History Museum, the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, Kiwanis, the Farmers Market, Rotary and many more.

2/G – Describe to what degree the project goals are measurable.

The Chamber has for many years counted and surveyed visitors/tourists at the Kiosk at the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. This gives us a sense of the traffic year over year. This past year we began compiling an exit survey to ask questions related to what visitors/tourist found during their visit, what they found most interesting, what they did not find and what would they recommend to friends and relatives who ask them about their vacation. We actively use Google Analytics to look at the activities on our websites. We look at unique visitors, page views, time on line, mobile stats, Country of origin, exit pages, and many other statistics to help us to determine where our information is going and who is using it. We can adjust or augment our information based on the analytics received.

2/H – Describe the degree to which the project will leverage award funds with additional matching funds.

Many of the events or services we listed have a component of volunteer hours or in-kind donations. The Chamber would not be able to do any of these events or offer the services without the help of a very large corps of volunteers. The volunteers who man the phones and greet the visitors/tourists who come to the Chamber office are the backbone of the VIC. These volunteers give countless hours at the Chamber office, the kiosk and the Grand Old Fourth and other special projects throughout the year. During the course of the year our volunteers contribute almost 4,000 hours of their time which equates to almost \$40,000. A full accounting of the matching funds is found at the bottom of the budget page.

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Advertising, publicizing or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists.

An important part of the marketing of Bainbridge Island are the brochures we prepare in house to provide tourists/visitors with information as to the current places to stay, dine, shop, taste wine, recreate and most importantly where the bathrooms are. A new brochure based on activity levels is the “Lynwood Center” will be produced in 2015. The brochures we produce are printed on an as needed basis and contain the latest information with regards to each of the previously listed categories. The printing, as we have said, is in house and less expensive than using a printing company and the information is current. The costs for this segment of the program are:

Printing, paper cost, copy machine lease, staff time8,000 copies	\$6,000.00
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Developing strategies to expand tourism.

Over the last couple of years, the Chamber's website has become the most dominant and dynamic tool used to market the island. Visitors/tourists have moved with the technology and we now find that many of our website page views are from mobile devices. This past year the Chamber created a micro site for the Grand Old Fourth of July. This site was up for only 30 days prior to the 4th and received over 8,000 users, 11,000 unique visitor sessions, and over 20,000 page views. This shows us the power of our website and prompted the Chamber to create a micro site for "Visitor Information". This site will contain all the pertinent information for visitors/tourists. Where to stay, shop, dine etc. We will also include an aggregator for room bookings on this site. Based on the traffic received on the Grand Old Fourth Site, we anticipate the Visitor site will garner very high traffic levels as well. The site will be located at www.visitbainbridge.com. The traffic levels also become a base line for reporting of visitor inquiries as required by the State. With the installation of Wi-Fi in Winslow, we find an even greater need for dynamic web presences and the use of our Social Media for marketing. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and LinkedIn are also used when we market the island. Following are costs involved in the finalization, registration, maintenance and monthly upkeep of the Visitor Information web site:

Completion of micro web site		\$2,500.00
Maintenance of web site	\$250/ quarter	\$1,000.00
Registration of URL/server (visitbainbridge.com)		\$15.00
Room registration aggregator		\$500.00
Staff time to maintain information	2 hours per week for 50 weeks \$15.45/ hr.	\$1,545.00

Operating tourism promotion agencies

The Chamber operates two facilities to meet and greet our visitors/tourists. The main Chamber office on Winslow way is open six days a week, fifty weeks a year. The Chamber also operates the Kiosk at the ferry terminal. This is open seven days a week during the main tourist season from May 1 to September 30. It is opened on weekends during the latter part of the spring shoulder season and the beginning part of the shoulder season in the fall. Under the supervision of experienced chamber personal, the chamber visitor centers are manned by enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff and volunteers dedicated to providing visitors/tourists with reliable information that is current, relevant and informative. Costs to maintain supervision and staffing are as follows:

Supervision hours:	Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 2 hrs./wk. @ \$15.45/hr. =	\$741.60
	High Season	26 wks. @ 4 hrs./wk. @ \$15.45/hr. =	\$1,606.80

Staffing hours: Chamber Office:	Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 5 hrs./wk. @ \$12.00/hr. =	\$1,440.00
	High Season	26 wks. @ 5 hrs./wk. @ \$12.00/hr. =	\$1,560.00

Kiosk:	Shoulder Season	24 wks. @ 6 hrs./wk. @ \$12.00/hr. =	\$1,728.00
	High Season	26 wks. @ 15 hrs./wk. @ \$12.00/hr. =	\$4,680.00

(Volunteer hours: Chamber office: 1,850 hours @ \$9.34/hr. = \$17,279.00
Kiosk: 1,000 hours @ \$9.34/hr. = \$9,340.00)

Marketing and operations of special festivals and events.

The Grand Old Fourth of July is the largest community event on Bainbridge Island each year. Estimates put attendance at between 25,000 and 35,000 people depending on the weather. Featuring a Street Fair, Parade, Classic Car Show, Beer Garden, food and entertainment the Grand Old Fourth is a day-long adventure which over the years has become a homecoming for many of our former residents, and a welcoming for those who have chosen to make this their home. The draw for this event is from people from all over the state and into Canada. The Website designed for this event, www.grandold4th.com, was a tremendous success last year. The majority of visitors/tourists and local residents used this to find the information they needed. Schedule of events, locations of activities, parking, to the extent that our volunteers at the chamber office noted fewer numbers of phone calls in comparison to previous years. We will use this microsite to again provide all the needed information for this event. Planning, coordinating, marketing, staffing and volunteers all contribute to the success of this event

Grand Old Fourth of July

Marketing, event planning, operations, staff costs, materials	\$7,000.00
Website upkeep, maintenance and ongoing management (Jan to July)	\$700.00

(Volunteer hours during this event 1,000 hours @ \$9.34/hr. \$9340.00)

Operation of a tourism related facility.

The Chamber operates two facilities for the welcoming of visitors and the distribution of related materials from both the Chamber and all of our partners. The Kiosk at the ferry terminal is leased from Kitsap Transit and has no operations costs. The Kiosk was renovated several years ago and given a fresh coat of paint.

The Main Chamber visitor information area at 395 Winslow Way uses 250 square feet of space out of a total of 2,500 square feet. Proportionate costs for the facility would be 10% of total operating costs as outlined below:

Rent:	\$27,000.00	10%	\$2,700.00
Electrical:	2,821.76	10%	282.17
Janitorial:	1,680.00	10%	168.00
Phone/Int./Email:	3,771.23	10%	377.12
Refuse:	177.00	10%	17.70
Insurance:	<u>2,569.38</u>	10%	<u>256.94</u>
Totals	\$38,019.36	10%	\$3,801.93
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Supporting Documentation

1. The timeline for this project is January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015
2. A detailed budget follows
3. Project scalability is determined by the projects and their make-up. It stands to reason that a membership in an organization cannot be scaled back. You either belong or you do not. The cost of participating in an event such as the Bike Expo is determined by the booth costs. You either pay the booth costs or you do not participate. Scaling back support for the Grand Old Fourth or the Taste of Bainbridge would mean the reduction or elimination of parts of the event. The cost of creation of a web page is set by the contract with the web designer and again you either have the page or you do not do it. Areas that can be scaled back would include staff hours and the management of those hours, printing of tourism related hand-out materials.
4. Income and Expense summary spreadsheet attached
5. Included in spreadsheet
6. Included in spreadsheet
7. Letters of support attached.

Budget

Advertising, publicizing or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists.

Marketing brochures	8,000 copies to be printed and distributed	
Costs include	design, paper, copier operating costs, collating, staff time	\$6,000.00

Developing Strategies to Expand Tourism

Visitbainbridge.com	Completion of site,	\$2,500.00
	Maintenance of site, \$250/qtr.	\$1,000.00
	Registration of URL/Lodging Aggregator	\$515.00
	Staff time to maintain information	\$1,545.00

Operating tourism promotion agencies.

Supervision hours	Shoulder/High seasons, Chamber office and kiosk at ferry terminal	\$2,348.40
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Staffing hours	Shoulder/High seasons, Chamber office and kiosk at ferry terminal	\$9408.00
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Marketing and operations of special festivals or events.

Grand Old Fourth	Marketing, planning, operation, staff time, printing, materials	\$7,000.00
	Grandold4th.com upkeep and maintenance	\$700.00

Operation of a tourism related facility.

Rent:	\$27,000.00	10%	\$2,700.00	
Electrical:	2,821.76	10%	282.17	
Janitorial:	1,680.00	10%	168.00	
Phone/Int./Email:	3,771.23	10%	377.12	
Refuse:	177.00	10%	17.70	
Insurance:	<u>2,569.38</u>	10%	<u>256.94</u>	
Totals	\$38,019.36	10%		Total \$3,801.93

Matching funds through volunteer hours or sponsorships for events.

Volunteer hours	VIC during the course of the year (2,850 hrs. @ \$9.34/hr.)	\$26,619.00
Volunteer hours	During the Grand Old Fourth (1,000 hrs. @ \$9.34/hr.)	\$9,340.00
Sponsorships:	Grand Old Fourth	\$12,500.00
Sponsorships:	In-kind creation of Grandold4th.com (Website)(2013)	\$5,000.00

Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Financial Statement				
			2014	
	Item	2014	Actual	2015
	Revenue	Budget	to 9/1/2014	Budget
	Chamber of Commerce	\$ 125,000	\$ 103,125	\$ 135,000
	Department of Licensing	\$ 98,000	\$ 68,822	\$ 105,000
	Visitor Information Centers	\$ 15,000	\$ 11,250	\$ 15,000
	Grand Old Fourth	\$ 40,000	\$ 39,432	\$ 45,000
	Golf Scramble	\$ 15,000	\$ -	
	Home and Garden	\$ 14,000	\$ -	
	Map Project	\$ 35,000	\$ 31,920	\$ -
	New Years Eve			\$ 30,000
	2013-Installation Dinner	\$ 9,500	\$ 11,500	\$ 12,500
	Cost of Goods	\$ 30,000	\$ 34,829	\$ 25,000
	Total Revenue	\$ 321,500	\$ 231,220	\$ 317,500
	Expenses			
	Chamber of Commerce	\$ 190,000	\$ 134,939	\$ 195,000
	Department of Licensing	\$ 70,000	\$ 51,499	\$ 70,000
	Visitor Information Centers	\$ 15,000	\$ 11,250	\$ 12,000
	Grand Old Fourth	\$ 14,500	\$ 13,613	\$ 15,000
	Golf Scramble	\$ 8,500	\$ -	
	Home and Garden	\$ 1,700	\$ -	
	Map Project	\$ 15,000	\$ 1,350	
	Marketing		\$ 2,487	\$ 2,500
	New Years Eve			\$ 12,500
	2013-Installation Dinner	\$ 6,500	\$ 7,190	\$ 8,500
	Total Expense	\$ 321,200	\$ 222,328	\$ 315,500
	Net income (Expense)	\$ 300	\$ 8,891	\$ 2,000