



## 2019 LTAC Final Report Bainbridge Island Lodging Association

The mission of the Bainbridge Island Lodging Association is to promote overnight tourism by supporting lodging owners; hosting and maintaining [DestinationBainbridge.com](http://DestinationBainbridge.com) and regionally promoting Bainbridge Island as an overnight destination in multiple channels.

BILA inclusively promotes all licensed Island lodging as well as related tourist-focused businesses, events, and attractions. Our website was the first comprehensive trip-planning site for Bainbridge Island. It provides free listings for all licensed lodging properties on Bainbridge and and promotes local businesses, events, and attractions of interest to overnight visitors.

BILA is committed to working in collaboration with other tourist-focused organizations to leverage our respective efforts, and eliminate duplication of effort. In 2019, we strengthened partnerships with Visit Bainbridge (a project of the Bainbridge Chamber of Commerce and the Bainbridge Island Downtown Association); Bainbridge Island Downtown Association; Arts & Humanities Bainbridge; the Bainbridge Island Winery Alliance; Winslow Art Center; and Tour Bainbridge.

### **Summarize the activities undertaken in providing the scope of work described in Attachment A.**

Grant objectives were achieved through multi-channel marketing efforts, targeted promotions, website expansion and enhancement; continued promotion of shoulder season activities; and strengthening collaborative partnerships with local organizations. See Appendix A for a brief summary of activities.

### **Reference the project objectives specified in Attachment A. Were those objectives achieved? Why or why not? Were there any unexpected positive outcomes or challenges?**

- **Manage and enhance [www.DestinationBainbridge.com](http://www.DestinationBainbridge.com), BILA's trip planning website for overnight visitors. Significantly achieved.**
  - In 2019 BILA maintained and enhanced our tourist-focused website: [DestinationBainbridge.com](http://DestinationBainbridge.com). BILA undertook these activities: routine updates; the addition of new lodging listings; seasonal lodging promotions; the update of maps; new blog posts; the updates and addition of new itineraries; update of our seasonal event calendar and the addition of a new dynamic event calendar (in collaboration with Arts & Humanities, building on their recently launched event calendar).
  - We did not implement one site feature specified in our 2019 proposal: the ability for site visitors to search for reservation availability by date range and amenities. The technical work was completed by a software programming contractor but the resulting solution proved to be too cumbersome to integrate seamlessly with our existing technology. Our primary webmaster determined it would negatively impact the user experience and recommended we abandon the project, and look for a standardized (vs. custom) approach.
  - Our data analytics reveal a significant increase, during 2019 in the use of [DestinationBainbridge.com](http://DestinationBainbridge.com) Our overall website traffic increased by 69% over 2018, an increase of 13,305 additional users to our website. Google traffic increased an additional 137% over the previous year due to 2019 blogging activity and landing page development.

## Website RESULTS

- By the end of 2019, 68 Island lodging properties were listed on [DestinationBainbridge.com](http://DestinationBainbridge.com).
- In 2019, 2,447 users clicked through our website to Bainbridge lodging properties where they could formalize their overnight reservations..
- Staff turnover in 2019 created a lapse in some activities. Specifically, our premium membership program was put on hold, while we worked to revise our program to provide more value-added benefits for members.
- **Advertise and promote overnight tourism through a variety of marketing efforts. Achieved. Promotion and advertising efforts in 2019 included:**
  - **Advertising:** In addition to placing ads with Experience WA, we also elected to participate in co-op advertising opportunities to promote Bainbridge Island as a destination.
    - Participated in co-op advertising placement in Bainbridge-focused ads coordinated by Visit Bainbridge. Ads appeared in Alaska Airlines Beyond Magazine and Pacific Publishing NW Destinations Holiday Guide.
    - Placement in the Deals section of [ExperienceWA.com](http://ExperienceWA.com), the official tourism website for WA State.
  - **Advertising Reach:**
    - Alaska Airlines Beyond magazine provided 3.8 million circulation to readers.
    - Pacific Publishing Bainbridge pullout was placed in 7 local Seattle neighborhood newspapers with a circulation of approximately 25,000.
    - ExperienceWA (Nov/Dec): this advertising produced 1,066 impressions and 91 clicks to our website.
  - **Itineraries and Rack Cards**
    - Online itineraries were updated with current information. BILA elected to forego printing of rack cards so that we could concentrate on Internet based activities..
  - **Tradeshows and local networking groups:**
    - Participated in the Concierge Guild Trade Show (200 attendees).
    - Presented to the Bainbridge Business Connection-Island Tourism panel (20 attendees).
    - Engaged in FAM (familiarization) tours for: Wedding Planners, the Port of Seattle, and the Seattle Sports Commission.
    - Became a participating member of the new Greater Seattle Business Association initiative (GSBA is the largest LGBTQ and Chamber of Commerce in North America).
    - Continued joint activities with the North Kitsap Tourism Coalition -- attending monthly meetings, providing Island-specific promotions; and, facilitating the development of new videos promoting the Working Studio Tours and Christmas in the Country.
  - **Continued Bainbridge Island representation on local tourist groups:**
    - Visit Kitsap Peninsula Board member
    - North Kitsap Tourism Coalition
    - Bainbridge Island Tourism Collective

- **Ongoing Google ads and Facebook promotions**
  - Staff turnover in early 2019 led us to curtail active facebook promotions for the first half of 2019, as new staff worked to increase collaboration with other tourism businesses and organizations.
  - By year end, BILA placed 6 facebook ads reaching 12,829 people, 2015 post engagements, and 75 clicks to our website.
  - Google ads run monthly with 84.5K impressions and 7,500 clicks.
- ***Assist lodging owners to provide quality services, ensure customer satisfaction, and improve hospitality. Deliver periodic training, familiarity tours of local attractions, tourism collateral and hospitality handbooks for each lodging facility. Achieved***
  - Facilitated 3 member meetings with updates on ADA regulations, LTAC grants, business partner opportunities.
  - Sent monthly emails to lodging owners inviting participation in seasonal promotions and providing partner offerings, including coupons and discounts to share with overnight guests..
  - Distributed collateral materials for local attractions to ensure that lodging establishments have a variety of brochures available to their guests.
  - In place of the proposed “Island Welcome Book” specified in our contract, BILA developed a new digital welcome guide (TouchStay, a web-based mobile application) and made it available to lodging owners. TouchStay is a digital guide lodging hosts can send to guests prior to arrival to welcome them to their property, and to Bainbridge Island. The Bainbridge Island City Guide, a section in the Welcome Guide, offers a single source of information for visitors - to showcase what to see, do, where to eat and drink, and provides other important information where to find gas, emergency services, and more. It can also be distributed as a standalone Guide for day visitors, and modified to serve as local event guide for classes, workshops, and events like Paint Out Winslow.
- ***Expand the Lodging Association’s partnerships to promote overnight accommodations in tandem with multi-day events, shows, and performances. Support BIDA in the production of BIDA’s Downtown Walkabout Guide. Achieved.***
  - **Paint Out Winslow:** BILA took a lead sponsorship position with Paint Out Winslow in 2019.
    - The 3-day event in September drew more than 50 artist competitors from all over WA and OR state. It also attracted hundreds of islanders and off-islanders from Seattle and throughout the Northwest to observe the artists painting on-site and to view and purchase the art at daily exhibitions. Five notable guest artists from Oregon, Arizona, California, and Washington presented painting demonstrations onsite at historic sites on Bainbridge Island. 30 paintings sold at the event, and Paint Out Winslow was able to donate \$1,300 to the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum. In 2020 the event, now named Bainbridge Island Plein Air, will be a 4-day event and marketed to draw artists and enthusiasts from all over the region.
    - BILA efforts for the 2019 Paint Out event included event promotion; piloting a shuttle service to bring visitors from Winslow to Lynwood Center to see artists at work and to encourage dining and shopping in Lynwood; and the creation of a digital event guide for use by participants with information on where to eat, stay, and what to do while on Bainbridge Island.

- **Bainbridge Island Downtown Association:** BILA engaged with the Downtown Association as a major contributor to the Walkabout Guide, as a Street Dance Sponsor, and as an advertiser in BIDA's Holiday Guide
- **Winery Alliance of Bainbridge Island:** general promotion of Wine on the Rock events; featured lodging promotions and discounts; promote WoTR shuttle service.
  - BILA focused on the November WoTR
  - 4 redemptions of the code STAYBI2019 (overnight lodging promo)
  - Facebook: 3,183 people reached, 491 post engagements
  - 10 shuttle passengers (4 out of state)
- **Cross-promotion of local programs and events** (Founders' Pickleball Tournament; BPA shows; Bloedel events; Wine on the Rock)
  - Bloedel Solstice Walks: 3,466 people reached, 65 Event Responses (at least 1 known overnight stay as a result)
  - Fall promos: 6250, reach, 895 engagement
- **Contributed content** for Pacific Publishing Bainbridge Island pullout in collaboration with Visit Bainbridge.
- Created a **discount coupon promotion program** with local businesses. BILA will continue to build out this program with additional partners. Current coupon participants:
  - **Winslow partners:** Bon Bon Candies, The Traveler, Fletcher Bay Winery, Eagle Harbor Winery; Sweet Deal Clothing; Sweet Life Farms; Madison Diner
  - **Coppertop partners:** Bainbridge Brewing, Fletcher Bay Winery, Sweet Dahlia Baking; Powell and Jones Chocolates; Storyville Coffee; That's A Some A Pizza
- **July 4th Fireworks partnership:** Not completed. This project was cancelled. BILA worked actively with the fireworks committee to help secure funds to support an Aerial Drone Show to replace the traditional fireworks display. Unfortunately, sufficient funds were not secured and the program was cancelled.
- ***Describe the involvement of any partners specified in Attachment A, as well as any unexpected cooperative relationships that developed through the implementation of the project.***

In 2019, BILA expanded cooperative partnerships to include:

- Introducing at the end of 2019 a curated version of the new event calendar ([bainbridgecurrents.com](http://bainbridgecurrents.com)) developed and supported Arts & Humanities Bainbridge. Benefits of building on A&H event calendar include: reducing duplication of effort; a single source all events on Bainbridge Island; leveraging LTAC investment in the Artsopolis Platform for multiple organizations, including BILA.
- BILA collaborated with Tour Bainbridge to test shuttle services for Wine On The Rock and Paint Out Winslow. Tour Bainbridge also partnered with lodging to offer seasonal discounts on local wine and sightseeing tours.
- BILA deepened involvement with North Kitsap Tourism Coalition and facilitated the development and distribution of a promo video for the island-wide holiday Studio Tours and Christmas in the Country.

*Reference the project budget specified in Attachment A. Provide an analysis of actual expenses and income in relation to the projected budget. See Appendix for a complete budget detail.*

<b>Project Budget</b>	<b>COBI Budget</b>	<b>BILA Actual</b>
Administration & Overhead	\$3,500	\$3,147.10
Destination Bainbridge Website	\$8,000	\$8,301.50
Promote Bainbridge Island	\$13,500	\$13,210.38
Island's Overnight Lodging	\$3,000	\$4,169.63
Partnerships	\$32,000	\$31,044.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$59,872.61</b>

*Provide a good faith best-estimate of actual attendance generated by the scope of work in multiple travel categories.*

Both the City and the State of Washington ask lodging tax recipients to estimate their impact on travel, overnight tourism, and the local economy. The Lodging Association estimates our impact on the number of travelers staying overnight in paid accommodations. Other overnight travelers, staying with friends and family in unpaid accommodations may be influenced by our activities and promotions -- but we cannot track or estimate that. We also make no attempt to track day visitors to the Island. Our estimates are presented in the third, fourth and sixth columns below.

	Lodging Taxes Generated	Estimated Lodging Revenues Generated	Estimated Revenue to Local Economy	Estimated Count of Room Nights	Estimated Count of Overnight Tourists	Change From Previous Year
2015	\$175,796	\$4,394,900	\$17,579,600	19,533	42,972	
2016	\$215,228	\$5,380,700	\$21,522,800	23,914	52,611	22%
2017	\$243,337	\$6,083,425	\$24,333,700	27,037	59,482	13%
2018	\$262,662	\$6,566,550	\$26,266,200	29,185	64,206	8%
2019 Estimated	\$254,250	\$6,356,250	\$25,425,000	28,250	62,150	-3%
2019 Actuals	\$267,397	\$6,684,925	\$26,739,700	29,711	65,364	2%
10% Increase from Website	\$26,740	\$668,493	\$2,673,970	2,971	6,536	5%
3% Increase from Marketing	\$8,022	\$200,548	\$802,191	891	1,961	3%
Total Increase from BILA	\$34,762	\$869,040	<b>\$3,476,161</b>	3,862	<b>8,497</b>	8%

BILA's activities in 2019 contributed to an overall increase in overnight tourists and revenues generated by overnight tourism. As you might suspect, we can't easily count the number of overnight stays in paid lodging on the Island. Most hotels and even small AirBnb businesses consider that proprietary information. But we have been able to develop estimates based on the annual tax revenues collected by the City.

The Lodging Association has developed what we consider highly conservative estimates of our impact in 2019 including:

- Generating approximately 8,500 overnight stays, by guests traveling 50 miles or more to the Island;
- An addition of \$35,000 in lodging tax revenues for the city;
- The expenditures of an additional \$3.5 Million in our local economy;

**METHODOLOGY:** BILA uses the tax revenue figures to estimate the total lodging revenues generated, the impact on the local economy, and counts of room nights and overnight tourists.

The history of lodging taxes collected by our City provides a solid indicator of the growth in lodging during the past twenty years. At the time we offered our original estimates of impact COBI was projecting that lodging tax revenue in 2019 would approximate \$254,000. That proved to be conservative, as the city actually received **\$267,397 in lodging tax revenues**. The actual revenues and updated estimates are highlighted, in yellow, in the chart above.

This actual tax revenue provides the basis for an update of hotel revenues. COBI receives four cents lodging tax for every dollar spent in paid overnight lodging. The City authorizes the collection of two cents tax and the State matches that as an incentive for the city to support tourism with the fund. Dividing annual lodging tax revenue (\$267K) by .04 results in an estimate of **\$6.68 Million of taxed lodging revenues** in 2019.

Dividing total lodging revenue by the average price of an overnight stay leads to an estimate of the **number of room nights** on the Island. Specifically, we assumed that an average overnight stay on the Island is now \$225 (including our 10.8% tax). Dividing the estimated lodging revenues (\$6.68M) by this number leads to an estimate of **29,000 paid overnight stays** on the Island in 2019.

After estimating the number of overnight stays we estimated the **number of individual overnight tourists** by multiplying by 2.2. The large number of suites and homes in our Island lodging industry suggest that occupancy is higher than two. BILA estimates that in total there were **65,000 overnight tourists** staying in 2019.

Other assumptions in the projections are based on figures used by west coast travel analysts at **Dean Runyon Associates**. Their last full economic study of Washington was in 2011 but they updated their overall estimates of tourism revenue in 2017 for our State Tourism committee. The most significant of their findings is their conclusion that *for every \$1 spent on lodging, tourists spend an additional \$4 in the local economy*. The four to one ratio is how we estimate **overall revenue to our economy**.

# APPENDIX

## 2019 WORK PLAN SUMMARY

WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES	RESULTS
<b>Destination Bainbridge Website</b>	
Routine management: domain, hosting, updates; add and update listings; addition of new attractions, dining, etc.	Completed
Improve calendar synchronization and sorting capabilities;	Completed, not implemented because of integration issues with the current site.
Augment site with new directory of amenities and services on island.	Largely completed. Eat and Drink Maps updated; Holiday Studio Tour Map created; Replaced plan for listing amenities and services on website with TouchStay digital City Guide. More amenities and services will continue to be added in 2020.
Add new event calendar	New addition to site in collaboration with Arts & Humanities bainbridgecurrents.com in the last quarter of 2019. This work will continue in 2020.
<b>Promote off-season overnight lodging</b>	
Advertising	Completed- Alaska Airlines, NW Destination Holiday Guide, Experience WA Deals
Social media promotion	Completed - Facebook and Google Ads
Itineraries, blogs, rack cards, FAM tours and tradeshow	90% Completed. Added Island-wide Holiday Studio Tours map; 8 blog posts, updated posts and itineraries; 1 tradeshow; 3 FAM tours. Did not produce printed rack cards. Added and updated itinerary content on website.
<b>Support and promote island overnight lodging</b>	
Workshops	Completed: 3 meetings with lodging owners
Welcome Guide	Completed - new digital, mobile-app technology
Collateral distribution	Completed
<b>Partnerships</b>	
Overnight packages (Wine On the Rock, Fall, coupons)	Completed - Wine on the Rock Promo; Fall promo Distributed coupons for local discounts
Paint Out Winslow	Completed - Sponsorship; Pilot shuttle service and Event Welcome Guide
4th of July Fireworks	Not completed. Fireworks were cancelled in 2019. BILA worked in the first 2 quarters to help secure funding.
BIDA Walkabout Guide, Holiday Guide, Street Dance	Completed

**2019 BUDGET DETAIL**

<b>Project Budget Expense Detail</b>	<b>COBI Contract Budget</b>	<b>BILA Actual Expenses</b>
<b>Administration &amp; Overhead</b>	<b>\$3,500</b>	<b>\$3,147.10</b>
Bookkeeping & accounting services	\$1,000	\$926.00
Office supplies & support	\$500	\$799.18
City required insurance	\$2,000	\$1,421.92
<b>Destination Bainbridge Website</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$8,301.50</b>
Website Management: domain, hosting, updates	\$3,000	\$4,941.50
Add listings of Island amenities & services	\$2,500	\$2,360.00
Improve calendar synchronization and sorting capabilities	\$2,500	\$1,000.00
<b>Promote Bainbridge Island</b>	<b>\$13,500</b>	<b>\$13,210.38</b>
Advertise with WA Tourism Alliance & Experience Washington	\$4,500	\$4,496.76
Promotional Tools: Blogs, Itineraries, Rack Cards	\$5,000	\$2,863.00
Internet and Social Media Promotion	\$4,000	\$5,850.62
<b>Island's Overnight Lodging</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>	<b>\$4,169.63</b>
Familiarization and Training Workshops	\$1,000	\$954.94
Distribute maps, brochures & posters to lodging	\$1,200	\$593.69
Welcome to Bainbridge Island Handbook	\$800	\$2,621.00
<b>Partnerships</b>	<b>\$32,000</b>	<b>\$31,044.00</b>
Partner on 4th of July Fireworks	\$10,000	\$10,000.00
Partner on Paint Out Winslow	\$5,000	\$6,182.00
Off-season Promotional Packages	\$2,000	\$1,500.00
Social Media Campaigns	\$5,000	\$2,689.00
BIDA's Walkabout Guide and other promotions	\$10,000	\$10,673.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$59,872.61</b>