

**CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
2020 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 91-065339

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

Primary Contact: **Kevin Dwyer**

Mailing Address: **395 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island WA, 98110**

Email(s): **kevin@BainbridgeChamber.com**

Day phone: **206-842-3700 Cell phone: 206 841-8487**

Please indicate the type of project(s) described in your proposal:

√	Project Type
√	Tourism marketing
√	Marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists
√	Supporting the operations of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a nonprofit organization*
	Supporting the operations and/or capital expenditures of a tourism-related facility owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district*

*If the proposal requests funds for a tourism-related facility, please indicate the legal owner of that facility **T & C Northeast LLC**

LODGING/TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

Applicant Information

1. **Describe the applicant's mission, history, and areas of expertise. Describe the applicant's experience in tourism promotion on Bainbridge Island and its demonstrated ability to complete the proposed project.**

The Chamber of Commerce mission is to:

- a. Promote the Community,
- b. Represent the Interest of Business Before Government,
- c. Provide Networking Opportunities and
- d. Create a Strong Local Sustainable Economy.

The Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce dates to 1927 as an organization dedicated to the promotion of the community and the betterment of business on the island. The BICC is a 501 (c) (6) not-for-profit organization providing an array of services to its members and the community at large. It has been successfully providing visitor and tourism services for more than 90 years, working with an increasingly diverse group of partners and interacting with thousands of visitors annually.

Alternative Question for event and facility

Describe the event or facility proposed, including its purpose, history, and budget. Include past attendance history, if applicable, and estimate the number of tourists drawn to the event or facility/year. Please estimate total attendance and the number of tourists estimated to attend in 2021. How has the activity been promoted in the past and what promotion is planned for 2021?

The Chamber operates the official Visitor Information Center for the island, located at 395 Winslow Way East, as well as the Visitor Information Kiosk (the little Yellow Building) at the Bainbridge ferry terminal. Both physical locations represent the successful execution of the Chamber's year-round tourism-related marketing efforts and support.

Each year our staff and volunteers welcome an estimated **150,000 guests** to the island. Visitors come from every State in the Union, every province in Canada and over 40 countries around the world, reinforcing our global reach. Much of our traffic is derived from tourists who are in Seattle to either take a Cruise Ship voyage to Alaska or are visiting the area for any number of trade conventions, or are simply attracted to Washington's plethora of natural and man-made attractions, from nearby Olympic National Park to the Space Needle, Lake Washington or the Puget Sound. Typically, the cruisers come in several days ahead of their voyage or stay for several days afterwards and are looking for "day trips" or longer excursions to explore the region. Our excellent relationship with the concierges in Seattle, Visit Seattle, and the staff associated with Seattle's cruise terminals has generated much of the tourism traffic that finds its way to the island.

The annual budget for the Chamber's visitor center's including staffing, overhead operations and utilities, web sites, affiliations, advertising, familiarization tours, events and the like is appropriately \$55,000.

To keep visitors and our community informed, the Chamber maintains a robust web site with an excellent search engine ranking. It is constantly updating its online information to keep it current and relevant to visitors who may access it from around the world. We are also seeing a significant increase in the number of web visitors who access us through mobile devices. Social media has become another critical marketing tool for the Chamber.

Moreover, the Chamber works collaboratively with most island organizations to help promote and support their events and activities, ranging from the Chilly Hilly in February to the Rotary Auction in early summer and many, many others. It also stages its own Grand Old Fourth of July, annually rated among the island's most popular events. **(See the separate line item in the attached budget).**

- 2. If appropriate, please identify any project partners and briefly describe the involvement of each. Please note that the maximum award of \$112,500 will apply to any single project, even if its proposed by a team of partners.**

The Chamber is proud to have many partnerships with organizations on the island. The Bainbridge Island Downtown Association, Visit Bainbridge, the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, the Bainbridge Island Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council are to some of the more significant groups we cooperate with. The Chamber actively distributes brochures from each of these organizations to island visitors and residents. The Chamber also distributes maps and brochures to island hotels, retail stores and restaurants and other entities. And, it also partners up with other island organizations such as Bloedel Reserve, Friends of the Farms, KiDiMu, The Bainbridge Island Historical Museum, The Bainbridge Island Museum of Art, the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, Squeaky Wheels, the Winery Alliance, the North Kitsap Tourism Consortium and many more.

- 3. If appropriate, please list each project and the amounting of funding awarded and utilized from Lodging Tax (Civic Improvement) Fund within the last five years (2016-2020).**

2016 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center: funded amount	\$56,426
2017 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center: funded amount	\$56,000
2018 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center: funded amount	\$70,000
2019 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center: funded amount	\$63,000
2020 Bainbridge Island Visitor Information Center: funded amount	\$40,000

- 4. If any previous projects by the applicant were funded through the Lodging Tax (Civic Improvement) Fund and were not completed and/or if reports were not submitted to the City as required, please explain**

None.

Project Information

- 1. Described the proposed Project.**

- a. Scope.** Identify the project's main objectives and how each will be achieved. Be as specific as possible about the proposed services, measurable impacts, distribution methods and costs.

As previously stated, the Chamber operates the official Visitor Information Center for the island, located at 395 Winslow Way East, as well as the Visitor Information Kiosk (the little Yellow Building) at the Bainbridge ferry terminal. We provide both physical, online, and telephone interaction with a whole host of visitors from all over the world. We do are best – through staff and volunteers – to physically count tourists. Depending on factors such as the economy, weather and so forth, we

typically count anywhere from **120,000 to 150,000 visitors a year**. Through voice and physical contact, signage, and/or the Internet and social media we direct these visitors to island attractions, restaurants and shops.

- b. Budget.** Include a detail budget for the proposed project with itemized expenses and income. Include the amount requested from the Lodging Tax Fund and identify other sources of funding anticipated or obtained, including matching funds, as well as any in-kind contributions necessary to complete the project.

Please **see attached budget** for more details. Our budget proposal includes not only support for our Visitor Information Center(s), which operate year round, but also includes backing for events such as the Grand Old Fourth of July, memberships in essential tourism-related organizations, as well as materials and overhead costs. In addition, we produce a significant number of maps and brochures for distribution for dining, lodging, restrooms, Lynwood Center, family fun and Beer, Wine and Spirits. We produce them ourselves to keep them as current as possible.

In a typical year, the Chamber relies on volunteers to man our visitor information desk and help with staging events and distributing brochures. We estimate that volunteers represent close to **4,000 hours a year** in participation, helping to provide the human touch necessary in directing and informing our visitors and island guests.

- c. Schedule.** Provide a project timeline that identifies major milestones

The timeline for this project is January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021. Specific dates such as the Grand Old Fourth of July and others are noted in the individual line items.

If applicable, please describe the project's scalability. How would the project's scope and budget be adjusted should the full amount of LTAC funding requested not be rewarded?

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 is determined by booth costs and other event related costs. You either pay for the booth or you do not attend. Scaling back for the Grand Old Fourth of July would result in some services not being provided. The cost of maintenance of a website could mean that information is not current and would lead to inaccurate or out of date information. Areas that could be scaled back would include staff hours, the management of the staffing and the printing of tourism related materials.

Please provide a brief narrative statement to address each of the selection criteria:

A - Expected impact in increased tourism in 2021

In a normal year, our staff and volunteers would have counted and interacted with more than 100,000 visitors/tourists from January to the end of August at the Kiosk at the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. The total for 2019 was somewhere north of 125,000. Our visitors/tourists come from all 50 States, all Provinces of Canada and over 40 countries from around the world. There were 218 Cruise ship scheduled sailings in 2019, but that business was non-existent for most of 2020 with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Normal conventions, Seattle hotel occupancies and overnight stays were greatly curtailed for most of 2020.

Based on promotional efforts under way by our partner organization, Visit Bainbridge, which has placed a number of ads and articles in numerous magazines and newspapers promoting Bainbridge as a desirable Staycation destination, we anticipate an uptick in island tourism in 2021 over 2020. Nobody knows for certain whether, or not there will be a return to a “normal” market in Seattle and on the island, but we have to prepare for the inevitable.

If all is well by the beginning of the traditional tourist season in early May, Seattle could rebound and we could possibly see somewhere in the neighborhood of 20 million visitors staying overnight in the Emerald City and Cruise Ship returning to near normal scheduled sailings in 2021. If this happens, and we have no way of guessing either way at this point, Bainbridge by its proximity to Seattle should reap some of the benefits of that turnaround. It stands to reason that what happens in Seattle reflects what we can expect on Bainbridge Island - except for the number of overnight stays.

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

The Chamber, in partnership with Visit Bainbridge, The BI Downtown Association, the North Kitsap Tourism Coalition, the Lodging Association and the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Parks District is continually working on promoting or creating events or activities that will increase overnight stays on Bainbridge. Over the years, we have worked in concert with partners to promote potential overnight stays for such annual events as the Chilly Hilly, Mochi Tsuki Celebration, The Quilt Festival, Spirits and Spirits, Winter Wonderland, the BIMA Jazz Festival and three Wine on the Rock events. During the high season (essentially May-October) lodging on the island is at or near maximum capacity. With the above events, we are working on supporting activities in the off season to increase overnight stays.

C – Projected economic impact on Bainbridge Island businesses.

According to the most recent numbers from Visit Seattle, which manages tourism in the King County region, the Seattle area had an estimated 41.9 million visitors in 2019, up 2.3 percent from the previous year. Those visitors spent \$8.1 billion in the city and county in 2019, an increase of 3.6 percent from the previous year. Visitors paid \$837.5 million in state and local taxes in 2019, an increase of 2.4 percent from the previous year.

Obviously, the Covid-19 pandemic has greatly cut into the numbers, but if the tourism tide turns around, Seattle will definitely see an uptick in visitor numbers in 2021 and correspondingly so will Bainbridge Island. As of this writing, we are seeing more and more visitors coming to the island, many attracted to Bainbridge as a perceived “safe place” to staycation and escape Seattle and others areas of the state and Pacific Northwest.

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

The Chamber partners with groups on and off the island to help attract overnight stays. These include hotel concierges in Seattle, other Kitsap Peninsula chambers of commerce, as well as the Kitsap Peninsula Visitor & Convention Bureau. As previously stated, the goal is to promote events and potential overnight stays during the island’s tourism shoulder season, from roughly November-April. Towards this end, the Chamber continues to work with groups such as the Quilt Guild to promote their fall Quilt Festival in downtown Winslow, as well the Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Committee on their Mochi Tsuki festival held in the first week of January. Other events have been successfully promoted in the past such as the Chinese New Year.

E – The applicant’s demonstrated history of organizational and project success.

The Chamber of Commerce has been welcoming visitors/tourists to the Island for over 90 years. Dedicated staff and volunteers who take pride in their island have demonstrated year after year the ability to provide accurate, up-to-date and 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 Grand Old Fourth web site is another example of a great success leading to the development of another program, the VisitBainbridge.com web site.

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

The Chamber is proud to have many partnerships with organizations on the island. Visit Bainbridge, The Bainbridge Downtown Association, the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island, the Lodging Association, the Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council and Bainbridge Youth Services are some of the 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, B.A.R.N. and many more.

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

The Chamber has for many years counted and surveyed visitors/tourists at the Kiosk outside the ferry terminal and in our office on Winslow Way. These records go back to 1998. This gives us a sense of the traffic year over year. Using Google Analytics we analyze information on our website including; 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 the information we provide based on the analytics received. With the creation of the Bainbridge Island Visitor Bureau, we can track attendance from information sent to convention goers.

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 ferry terminal kiosk, the Grand Old Fourth and other special projects throughout the year. During the year, our volunteers contribute almost 4,000 hours of their time, which equates to a value that is in excess of \$40,000.

Supporting Documentation

- 1. Provide your organization's 2019 income/expenses.**
- 2. Provide your organization's 2020 budget and an estimate actual 2020 revenue and expenses.**

- 3. Letters of partnerships – include letters from any partnering organizations committing to joint sponsorship of the organization and specifying their intended activities.**

	Budget for 2021 LTAC Proposal	Budget	Budget
	Item	Amount	Total
1	Bainbridge Island Visitors Bureau		
	Marketing, mailing, office supplies, administration	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
	Total		
2	Tourism marketing and promotion		
	Printing, paper costs, machine lease, staff time	\$7,000.00	\$7,000.00
3	Celebrate Bainbridge		
	Marketing, advertising, posters, staff time	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
4	Washington Tourism Alliance		
	Membership, Webinars, tours, visits	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
5	Website Development and Maintenance		
	Web site maintenance, registration, hosting, upkeep.	\$1,000.00	
	Staff time to maintain information	\$3,000.00	
	Total		\$4,000.00
6	Grand Old Fourth of July (53th Anniversary)		
	Marketing, event planning, operations, staff costs, materials	\$14,000.00	
	Website maintenance,	\$2,000.00	
	Proposed auxilliary staffing	\$1,000.00	
	Total		\$17,000.00
7	Operating a tourism related facility-staffing		
	Supervisory hours	\$6,000.00	
	Staffing Hours	\$15,000.00	
	Total		\$21,000.00
8	Operation costs of a tourism related facility		
	Total operations costs \$55,000 @ 15%	\$7,500.00	\$7,500.00
	Total LTAC Request		\$61,500.00

Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce Financial Statement

Item	2019 Actual	2019 Budget	2020 Budget
Chamber of Commerce	262,826	306,750	129,784
Department of Licensing	137,474	113,000	163,098
Total	<u>400,300</u>	<u>419,750</u>	<u>292,882</u>
Grand Old Fourth	36,083	35,950	5,665
Directory	4,610	8,700	175
Installation Dinner	7,100	7,100	4,400
Membership	95,150	105,000	80,251
Other Events	257,357	263,000	202,391
Total Income	<u>400,300</u>	<u>419,750</u>	<u>292,882</u>
Cost of Goods	53,974	57,000	15,919
Gross Profit	<u>346,326</u>	<u>362,750</u>	<u>276,963</u>
Expenses			
Chamber of Commerce	231,849	277,000	168,044
Department of Licensing	107,045	78,000	108,000
Lease Expense	42,245	42,500	33,710
Office Expense	12,704	12,500	10,299
Payroll Expense	235,086	249,000	192,027
Insurance Expense	7,382	7,000	7,707
Other Expense	41,477	44,000	32,301
Total Expense	<u>338,894</u>	<u>355,000</u>	<u>276,044</u>
Net Income (Expense)	<u>7,432</u>	<u>7,750</u>	<u>919</u>



September 5, 2019

Lodging Tax Committee Members,

It is with pleasure I write this letter of support and partnership of the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce and its 2020 Lodging Tax Grant Proposal.

As Executive Director of Visit Bainbridge, I rely heavily on the support of both the BICC and the Bainbridge Island Downtown Association. Over the past two years, they have been instrumental in providing the structured support necessary to implement a Destination Marketing Organization for Bainbridge Island. This has included such things as administration and personnel support, collateral, visitor center information and financial structure. Their longstanding ties to the Bainbridge community have been critical to forming strong Visit Bainbridge partnerships within the tourism community.

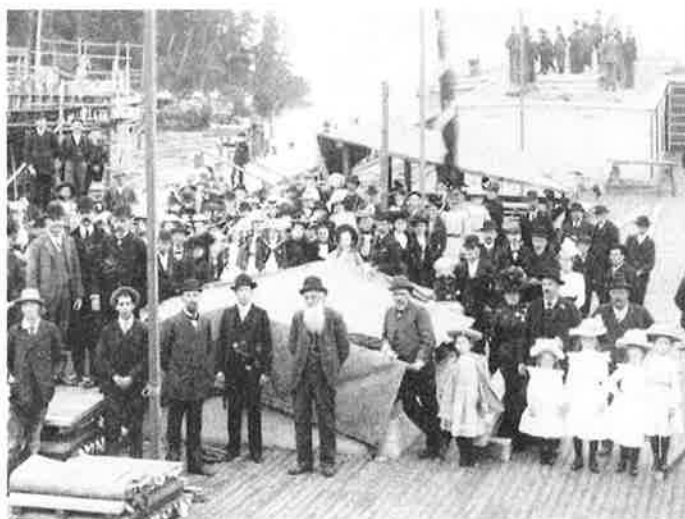
One of the most valuable BICC tourism assets are its sponsored community events. These are critical contributions that Visit Bainbridge can use to promote overnight stays, dining, shopping and exploration of our Island attractions by new visitors.

For this reason, I encourage your continued support of the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce's 2020 LTAC Proposal.

Warm Regards,

Chris Mueller

Christine Mueller
Executive Director
Visit Bainbridge



Port Blakely Ship Launching Circa 1890

Dear LTAC Committee Members,

The Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for our Museum and the entire nonprofit and business community on Bainbridge. Their partnerships with other tourist organizations on Island, like Visit Bainbridge and the BI Downtown Association, help promote the Museum and increase exposure to drive visitors up Ericksen Avenue during open hours.

The Chamber of Commerce is an essential resource for all of the local arts and culture organizations in downtown Winslow and beyond. They help keep us informed and often identify related projects and work to help drive marketing and advertising to enhance impact. Their organization is a critical part of the foundation of this community.

This year and next promise to be challenging for all of us with unprecedented obstacles due to the pandemic. Fewer businesses are renewing memberships with the Chamber because of reduced budgets. Like so many of our organizations, the Chamber needs support to continue the important work they do for our community long-term.

We hope you'll show your appreciation for all they do by supporting their proposal.

Sincerely,

Brianna Kosowitz
Executive Director
Bainbridge Island Historical Museum



215 Ericksen Avenue NE, Bainbridge Island WA 98110 • 206.842.2773
info@bainbridgehistory.org www.bainbridgehistory.org



Natalie Rodriguez
Tour Bainbridge
206.359.2201

321 High School Rd NE,
Suite D3, PMB 223
Bainbridge Island, WA
98110

September 28, 2020

Dear Lodging Tax Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce's 2021 Lodging Tax proposal to fund a variety of visitor information services.

As a partner of the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce, Tour Bainbridge is supportive of the visitor outreach provided by the Chamber. This includes the visitor information provided at the ferry terminal and at their main office on Winslow Way, in addition to special events held each year.

The Chamber's most notable special event is the Grand Ol' 4th of July celebration enjoyed by many. Tour Bainbridge benefits greatly from the exposure of participating in the parade and it is our opinion that this specific celebration is especially well put together and a Bainbridge Island tradition worth supporting.

In addition they have been an important partner for Tour Bainbridge to help my business navigate the COVID-19 crisis.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Natalie Rodriguez

Date: September 28, 2020
To: Lodging Tax Committee Members,
From: Jerri Lane, Executive Director, Bainbridge Island Downtown Association
Re: Lodging Tax Letter of Support for the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce

It is with pleasure I write this letter of support and partnership of the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce and its 2021 Lodging Tax Grant Proposal.

The Bainbridge Island Chamber provides an essential role in the success of our Island economic vitality. In addition to producing premiere events like the Grand Old Fourth, BICC is the super glue that holds our business community together.

One of the most valuable BICC tourism assets are its sponsored community events. These are critical contributions that promote overnight stays, dining, shopping and exploration of our Island attractions by new visitors. The list of Chamber's many contributions to our Island is too long to include in this letter, but their partnership is essential as we slowly recover from this pandemic.

For this reason, I encourage the Committee to fully fund the Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce's 2021 LTAC Proposal.

Jerri Lane
Executive Director
Bainbridge Island Downtown Association



BLOEDEL RESERVE

September 30, 2020

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
City of Bainbridge Island
280 Madison Ave.
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Dear LTAC Advisory Committee Members,

I am writing to offer my wholehearted support of The Bainbridge Island Chamber of Commerce's LTAC proposal for 2021. As a community business leader, I can confidently state that the Chamber's efforts to promote tourism and the Island's business community are invaluable. During this difficult time, the Chamber of Commerce's efforts are especially critical. An investment in the Chamber is an investment in hundreds of local businesses.

As the leader of the Bloedel Reserve, I know that our organization benefits greatly from Chamber services like the business directory, the map, the operation and staffing of the ferry terminal kiosk and Chamber office, and printing of tourism related materials. That's one of the reasons I agreed to join the Board of Directors six years ago. As the Board Treasurer of the Chamber, I can assure you that investing LTAC funds in the Chamber is wise and impactful.

Distributing LTAC funds to the Chamber of Commerce and other non-profit organizations in 2021 is absolutely essential. I believe so strongly in this that I decided that our organization would not be submitting an application to reduce the competition for funding and to ensure that vital community organizations like the Chamber would benefit from greater financial stability during this uncertain time.

I hope you will consider funding the Chamber of Commerce to the fullest extent possible. Thank you for your service to our community and for supporting tourism on Bainbridge Island.

Most sincerely,

Ed Moydell

The Richard A. Brown Executive Director

