APPENDIX A:
DESTINATION COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Asheville / Buncombe County, North Carolina

Asheville, North Carolina features layers of lush mountains that abound with adventure, profound cultural roots from literary giants to American royalty, and inspired locals whose passion projects jump from pop-up kitchens to performance art. Asheville has been a point of pilgrimage since the 1800s as a destination for inspiration, rejuvenation and self-expression. No wonder George W. Vanderbilt chose this Blue Ridge city for his greatest legacy, Biltmore. And perhaps why *Lonely Planet* named Asheville as the #1 destination in 2017, just one of many accolades for this hip mountain town.

Beer is big in Asheville and only continues to grow. With 28 breweries in the city and 30 in Buncombe County, Asheville has the most breweries per capital in the country. Four additional breweries will open by the end of 2017, including Turgua Farmstead Brewing, set on a five-acre farm in Fairview and utilizing fruits and root vegetables. SmartAsset.com ranked Asheville #2 among "The Best Cities for Beer Drinkers" following a study that analyzed various sources of data (December 2015).

Asheville is also a foodie town, with its own "Foodtopia" campaign to attract culinary tourists to its 250+ independent restaurants; six James Beard nominated chefs; 28 breweries; 14 farmers markets; one vegan butcher; 1,000+ family farms; one wild foods market, the first in the nation; three craft hard cideries using local apples; the fifth micro sake brewery in the nation; one rum distillery (the only one in Western N.C.); one kombucha bar, all local; one honey bar/boutique; one underground supper club with wild themes and secret locations; two insanely creative donut shops; two locations to get bean-to-bar local chocolate; one mushroom man tour guide; and the first woman to legally distill moonshine.

Asheville's creative arts community by the French Broad River, known for its visitor-friendly art studios and galleries set in old industrial buildings, has an influx of new experiences for travelers. In addition to New Belgium craft beer moving in, other new neighbors include The Salvage Station (large riverside music venue), Asheville Guitar Bar (cozy bar and music-themed art installations), RAMP Studios (home to artists and a ginger beer brewery) and The Foundation (new public art-filled home for 12 Bones and a second Wedge Brewing location). The area has a transformative multi-year plan that includes connected greenway spaces, bike trails and new adventures on the French Broad River.

The Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) uses the tag line "Discovery, inside and out" to drive visitation. The CVB redesigned ExploreAsheville.com with 120+ pieces of new content, 100+ navigation pages, realized four+ million user sessions (72% new site visits). The CVB oversees a $6 million advertising plan focusing on traditional core markets in the southeastern U.S. (Greensboro, Charlotte, Raleigh, NC; and Atlanta, GA) and expanded markets (Columbia,

Charleston, SC; Nashville, Knoxville, TN; Cincinnati, OH; and Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach, Miami, FL). The advertising campaign features new broadcast, print and digital ads reaching target audience of 455 million. Proactive Media Relations led 746 targeted pitches and 204 media site visits netting 3.8 billion impressions. Video assets realized a total of six million video views; return again received 2+ million views; 15- and 30- second spots received 3.9 million views. The CVB recently set out to establish Asheville as a Top Music Town – with a new music website (Explore Asheville Radio, comprehensive live music calendar, streaming video with IAMAVL editorial content); advertising campaign targeting music enthusiasts; a music culture PR and content push; and video to promote Asheville's music scene.

Perhaps one of the most progressive programs is Asheville's Tourism Product Development Fund. Since its inception in 2001, $23 million has been awarded to 27 community projects. Annual grants and loans range from $16,500 to $2 million. Several of the funded projects are historic or cultural: Grove Arcade, Western North Carolina Veteran's Memorial at Pack Square Park, Buncombe County Civil War Trails, Asheville Art Museum, and Riverglass Public Glass Studio & School. In 2017, grants were awarded to complete the Pack Square Park Canopy, River Access to Pearson Bridge; Smoky Mountain Adventure Center; The Collider; and the Rooftop & Event Space at Highland Brewing Company. Asheville added 2,072 new rooms in the last two years, demonstrating need for more tourism product to support increased visitation.

Bend, Oregon

Six hours southeast of Bellingham, or a short 55-minute flight from Seattle, the community of Bend, Oregon serves as the gateway to the Umpqua National Forest and the Warm Springs Reservation. With a relatively young population (average age of 37.3 years) of 84,000, Bend offers several world-class attractions including the Mount Bachelor ski area (3,683-acre ski area with 10 lifts); Deschutes National Forest (with hiking, forest, cave, wildlife, and camping); Lava Butte (volcano and hiking); Tumalo State Park, La Pine State Park, Pilot Butte, Farewell Bend State Park, and Dillon Falls; and several manmade parks including Pine Nursery Park and Bend Whitewater Park. The High Desert Museum educates visitors about the region through natural and cultural history exhibits. Art in the High District (juried show), the historic Tower Theatre, Les Schwab Amphitheatre, public art program, and Jazz at the Oxford Hotel are just some of the cultural and historic attractions in the community.

Bend hosts three million visitors annually,[1] with 63% of the visitors living outside Oregon and 14.7% of summer visitors from Washington State. Travel and tourism is responsible for 8,480 jobs in Deschutes County.[2] Lodging occupancy rates

[1] Source: RRC
[2] Source: Dean Runyon

ranged from 88.8% (peak) in July 2016 to 54.5% (low) in January 2017.[3] In FY16, Transient Room Tax (TRT) generated $7.6 million for the city; in FY14 and 15, the TRT generated $6.3 million in local tax.[4]

The Visit Bend annual FY17 budget is $3.26 million, with eight full-time employees. Using the marketing tag line, "It's Where You Go to Play," Visit Bend promotes summer and winter world-class river activities, trail running on the Urban Trail System, and enjoying the "vibrant energy of a hip, cosmopolitan mountain town." While the marketing driver for Visit Bend is the visitbend.com website (with more than 1.4 million visitors in 2015). The destination marketing organization (DMO: Visit Bend) recently began an aggressive :60 and :30 minute TV ad campaign throughout Oregon, Washington, and California ($300,000 dedicated to media buys outside Oregon). Radio ads promote special events and seasonal promotions. National and regional print ads showcase natural beauty and distinctive recreation.

The Bend Cultural Tourism Fund (BCTF) is a "grant program dedicated to enhancing the local economy through the promotion and cultivation of Bend's cultural tourism programs." The program, funded by 7.5% of Visit Bend's total annual public funding received from the City of Bend, awarded $125,000 to cultural tourism programs in 2015 and more than $185,000 in 2016.[5] The community also created a Community Wide Visitor Development Fund to attract major events, conferences and conventions to Bend. The FY17 Marketing and Business Plan includes a strategy focusing on diversification of tourism offerings with an aggressive cultivation of non-outdoor recreation tourism offerings. In addition to the Bend Cultural Tourism Fund, this effort includes expansion of the Bend Ale Trail and introduction of the Drinkable Diversions, expansion of the Tin Pan Alley Art Collection, the Roundabout Art Route, and the Pillars of Art Program.

San Juan Islands, Washington

The Business Association of San Juan County, doing business as San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau (SJIVB), was formed in 1999 as a private, nonprofit, volunteer destination marketing organization. The SJIVB has served as San Juan County's, and the Town of Friday Harbor's, official, locally-staffed destination marketing organization (DMO) since 2003. The organization's mission is to enhance the economic prosperity of San Juan County by promoting the San Juan Islands as a preferred, year-round travel destination, while respecting and sustaining the Islands' unique and diverse ecosystems, environments, lifestyles and cultures. The organization currently has 292 members, is managed by a 15-member board of Directors, and five staff. The Brand Positioning Statement is "For Adults 25-64, the SJIVB helps me imagine and plan a getaway for me and my family and friends that will reconnect us to a quality of life where there's breathtaking beauty,

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[3] http://www.visitbend.com/2017.4.21-Bend-Oregon-Occupancy-Report.pdf
[4] Bend Oregon FY 2017 Business Plan, http://www.visitbend.com/About-Us/Business-plan/
[5] http://www.visitbend.com/About-Us/bend-cultural-tourism-fund/

rich activities, and wonder and discovery encased in a soothing, rural, small-town atmosphere where life feels a little slower paced and a little safer.''

All marketing strategies drive consumers to the website, www.VisitSanJuans.com, the destination's #1 marketing tool. According to Google Analytics, web 'sessions' were up +7.9% (1,109,888), pageviews were up +16.7% (4,526,096), and pages per session were up +8% (4.08). Age groups viewing the website were as follows: 27% were 25-34 year olds, 22% were 35-44 years, 16% were 45-54 years, 15% were 55-64 years, 10% were 18-24 years, and 9% were 65+. Technology being used to view the site was as follows: desktop 48%, mobile 39%, tablet 13%.

Advertising was placed in key, regional, 'portal' travel guides and their corresponding websites including the Seattle Visitors Guide (350,000 X 2 issues), www.VisitSeattle.org, the Washington State Visitors Guide (375,000), www.ExperienceWA.com, a scenic byway ad and listing in the Washington State Scenic Byways Guide & Map (400,000 combined circulation). Via a lodging tax grant from the Town of Friday Harbor, SJIVB manages five seasonal advertising campaigns in the greater-Seattle area – Winter Romance, Spring, Summer, Fall/Savor the San Juans, and Cozy Island Holidays. Mixed media campaigns were placed in print, online, TV and radio for over 36,000,000 ad impressions. SJIVB tracked print media coverage of the Islands in over 689 print and online articles including *Sunset* magazine (1.6 million print & online), *The Wall Street Journal* (1.3 million), *Travel + Leisure* (976,500), *Conde Nast Traveler* (814,000), *The Seattle Times* (199,000), *Seattle* magazine (190,664), *Los Angeles Times* (15 million), and *Time Out New York* (141,866).

The SJIVB exhibited at "Seattle Wine & Food Experience" in February, "Taste Washington" in April (the country's largest single region food & wine tasting event), and "Red, White & Brew" in July (Seattle magazine's Washington Wine Awards tasting). SJIVB also partnered with the Ag Guild to create a two-page map/advertisement in the 2016 Puget Sound Fresh Farm Guide state-wide directory, titled "Explore the Farms & Food of the San Juan Islands," which featured 41 island farms and restaurants. 130,000 copies were published and distributed throughout the state. The San Juans were also included on the app at www.pugetsoundfresh.org/freshapp.

For the fifth year, SJIVB worked with reps from the Town of Friday Harbor; the Orcas, Lopez and San Juan Historical Museums; and the San Juan Island National Historical Park to coordinate efforts to market National Historic Preservation Month in May as "History Lives Here: Heritage Month in the San Juan Islands." It was promoted via a press release to regional media, and on the SJIVB website's home page and island history itineraries.

A Tourism Management Plan is currently under development, with county and industry stakeholders in conversation about how to move the plan to completion/implementation.

Accolades include 2016 *Travel + Leisure* World's Best Awards: #2 of World's Friendliest Island; 2015 *Conde Nast Traveler*, Best U.S. Islands for Family Vacations: Reader's Choice Awards; 2015 *Travel + Leisure*, Best Islands in the Continental US; 2015 TripAdvisor Traveler's Choice Awards: #9 of Ten Best Islands in the U.S.; *Lonely Planet*: #3 of Top 10 U.S. Destinations for 2013; San Juan Islands National Monument designated March 2013. In January 2017, completed $4.2 million fundraising campaign for Mount Grant Preserve, a 141-acre ridgeline offering multiple recreational opportunities.

Yakima Valley, Washington

The Yakima Valley is a collective of charming communities located within Central Washington. Boasting four seasons and over 300 days of annual sunshine, the Yakima Valley is an agricultural and multi- recreational area. The geography consists of various types of terrain including dense forests, stark desert landscapes, vineyards, hop and produce fields, orchards, rolling hills, scenic vistas which include Mt. Rainier and Mt. Adams and multiple water formations. Numerous historic towns, vintage electric trolleys and scenic wonders are within the Yakima Valley's countryside.

The first white men to view the Yakima Valley were members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1805. In 1865, Yakima County was officially established and by 1880, nearly 3,000 people were reported in the county. Historic attractions include Yakima Valley Museum and Children's Underground, Yakima Electric Railway Museum, Yakima Valley Trolley (vintage wooden railroad trolley cars), Yakima Valley Rail & Steam Museum, American Hop Museum, Central Washington Agriculture Museum, Fort Simcoe State Park Heritage Site, Where the West Still Lives / "City of Murals" (over 65 in Toppenish), Yakama Nation Cultural Center, and State Fair Park.

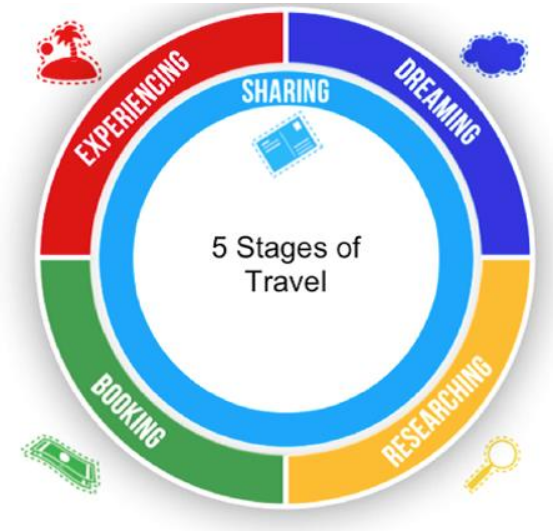
The Capitol Theatre serves as Yakima's primary performing arts facility and is located in downtown Yakima. This completely refurbished 82-year-old historic vaudeville theatre is a true testament to the community's dedication to its past and the arts. The stage is home to the productions of numerous local organizations such as the Yakima Symphony Orchestra, Town Hall Series, Community Concerts, as well as national tours and spectacular Broadway touring productions. The Warehouse Theatre Company features an outstanding art gallery and offers an impressive series of community plays throughout the year. Yakima's Symphony Orchestra provides an outstanding musical series. The Seasons Music Festival is held in a former church that was built using 17th Century Italian architectural designs. Its stained glass windows and high arching majestic ceiling provide the perfect ambiance for music and unparalleled natural acoustics.

The Yakima Valley is home to four American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), more than 70 wineries and over one third of the state's vineyards. It has a rich diversity of microclimates, rugged hillsides and wetlands. These factors contribute to the many wine grape varieties and wine styles achieved from Yakima Valley grapes. Exploration opportunities of the region's

viticulture is varied -- choose a walking tour of tasting rooms in historic downtown Yakima, a leisurely scenic drive from vineyard to vineyard in and around Wapato and Zillah, a stroll through urbane tasting rooms in Prosser or overnight in a romantic wine-country inn. Several wine celebrations also attract visitors. Spring Barrel Tasting, the last full weekend in April, provides the opportunity to sample wine straight from the barrel and stake a claim to the finished product before its even bottled. At Red Wine & Chocolate over Presidents' Day weekend (and close to Valentine's Day), chocolate lovers and wine devotees come together to enjoy pairings of creamy confections and rich red wines.

Outdoor recreation attracts nature enthusiasts to Yakima Valley. Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, fishing at Rimrock Lake, enjoying White Pass Ski Company's Alpine and Nordic facilities, bicycling Yakima Greenway, meandering down Yakima Canyon Road (Washington State Scenic Route 821), fly fishing on the Yakima River, or enjoying white water rafting during the annual Yakima Flip Flop are just a few of the adventures available.

The mission of Yakima Valley Tourism (YVT) is to stimulate economic development by marketing the Yakima Valley for conventions, groups and leisure travel. In 2015, travelers spent $376 million in Yakima County (a 2% increase over 2014), generated $34 million in state and local taxes (a 5% increase over 2014) and supported 3,800 jobs (a 6% increase over 2014). Conventions are a major generator of economic activity for downtown Yakima; 57 conventions were held in 2016 (an increase of 12% over 2015) with attendees generating a $10 million direct economic impact. The Yakima Valley Visitor Information Center had 11,764 walk-in visitors, helped extend the stay of 27% of visitors and facilitated $154,605 in new visitor spending.



YVT also drives the dreaming and planning phases of travel to its website, Visityakima.org. In 2016, 361,515 people visited the website, an 8% increase over 2015, and created a 15% increase in lodging referrals. Social media is also an effective marketing tool for YVT, with 2,073 new Instagram followers. *Google's Five Stages of Travel*. Seasonal campaigns focus on craft beverages and related agritourism, touting the destination as the birthplace of Washington State's wine industry. The on-line consumer campaigns are supported by print and digital media buys in regional, national and targeted (wine) magazines plus social media placements in Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The Tourism Bureau uses the tag line "Come. Visit. Stay. You'll see why we call this place home." Sports and conventions are two areas of proposed growth for Yakima Valley, with the Sports Commission strengthening the relationship with SOZO Sports Complex and expansion/headquarter hotel planned for the Convention Center.

To provide further comparison of cultural heritage assets between Bellingham and its competitors, the following tables show how TripAdvisor generated content ranks “museums” and “top things to do” for each destination.

Top Trip Advisor Attraction Listings of Competitors: Museums (July 8, 2017)				
Bellingham	**Asheville, NC**	**Bend, OR**	**San Juan Islands, WA**	**Yakima Valley, WA**
#1 Spark Museum **#2 Mindport** **#3 Whatcom Museum** **#4 Artwood Gallery** **#5 Bellingham Railway Museum** **#6 Whatcom Art Market**	#1 Lexington Glassworks #2 New Morning Art Gallery #3 Asheville Pinball Museum #4 Southern Highland Craft Guild Folk Art Center #5 Woolworth Walk #6 River Arts District #7 Downtown Asheville Art District #8 aSHEville Museum #9 Jonas Gerard Fine Art #10 Blue Spiral 1	#1 High Desert Museum #2 Des Chutes Historical Museum #3 TAW Gallery #4 Lubbesmeyer Art Studio & Gallery	#1 The Whale Museum #2 San Juan Islands Sculpture Park #3 Island Studios (Friday Harbor) #4 IMA – San Juan Islands Museum of Art #5 Arctic Raven Gallery #6 Orcas Island Artworks #7 Waterworks Gallery #8 San Juan Historical Society & Museum #9 Crow Valley Pottery #10 Lambiel Museum	#1 Yakima Valley Museum #2 Yakima Nation Cultural Center #3 American Hops Museum #4 Northern Pacific Railroad Museum #5 Sixth Street Art & Gift Gallery #6 Central Washington Agricultural Museum

Top Trip Advisor "Things to Do" Listings of Competitors: By Ranking (July 8, 2017)				
Bellingham	**Asheville, NC**	**Bend, OR**	**San Juan Islands, WA**	**Yakima Valley, WA**
#1 Whatcom Falls Park	#1 Biltmore Estate	#1 High Desert	#1 Moran State Park	#1 Yakima Valley
#2 Fairhaven Historic	#2 Biltmore Gardens	Museum	(Olga)	Museum
District	#3 Beer Tastings &	#2 Newberry	#2 Nature & Wildlife	#2 14 Hands Winery
#3 Boulevard Park	Tours	National	Tours	#3 Johnson's Orchards
#4 Lake Padden Park	#4 The North Carolina	Volcanic	#3 Boat Tours	#4 Cowiche Canyon Trail
#5 Triad River Tours (	Arboretum	Monument	#4 Lime Kiln Point	#5 Treveri Cellars
Upper Skagit rafting)	#5 Lexington	#3 Pilot Butte	State Park (Friday	#6 Airfield Estates Winery
#6 Triad River Rafting &	Glassworks	State Scenic	Harbor)	#7 Two Mountain Winery
Tubing (Upper Skagit	#6 Asheville Visitor	Viewpoint	#5 Whale Museum	#8 Alexander Nicole
rafting)	Center	#4 Tumalo Falls	#6 Pelindaba Lavender	Cellars
#7 Mount Baker Theatre	#7 Basilica of Saint	#5 Mt. Bachelor	Farm	#9 Bale Breaker Brewing
#8 Spark Museum	Lawrence	Ski Area	#7 Hiking & Camping	Company
#9 Larrabee State Park	#8 Asheville Pinball	#6 Lava Lands	Tours	#10 Terra Blanca Vintners
#10 Nooksack Falls	Museum	Visitor Center	#8 Dolphin & Whale	#11 Tucannon Cellars
#11 Boat Tours (San Juan	#9 Southern Highland	#7 Ski & Snow	Watching	#12 Kana Winery
Cruises/Schooner	Craft Guild Folk Art	Tours	#9 Lime Kiln Point	#13 Bonair Winery
Zodiac/Gato Verde)	Center	#8 Lava River	State Park Interpretive	#14 The Teapot Dome
#12 Chuckanut Bay	#10 Grovewood	Cave	Center	Gas Station
Distillery	Village	#9 Kayaking &	#10 English Camp	#15 Daven Lore Winery
#13 Interurban Trail	#11 Craggy Gardens	Canoeing	#11 Orcas Island	
#14 Big Rock Garden Park	#12 Thomas Wolfe	#10 Drake Park	Pottery	
#15 Lake Whatcom	Memorial			
	#13 Western NC			
	Nature Center			
	#14 Woolworth Walk			

APPENDIX B:
CITY OF BELLINGHAM MANAGEMENT ENTITIES

The primary roles of the **Bellingham Historic Preservation Commission** are to identify and actively encourage the conservation of the city's historic resources by:

- initiating and maintaining a register of historic places and reviewing proposed changes to register properties;
- raising community awareness of the City's history and historic resources; and
- serving as the City's primary resource in matters of history, historic planning, and preservation.

The Commission also reviews and makes recommendations on development proposals located in specified historic design review districts such as the Fairhaven Design Review District. While not involved directly in cultural heritage tourism promotion, Historic Preservation Commissioners may conduct a variety of research and education activities to promote historic preservation, which ultimately serves a cultural heritage tourism role by encouraging the maintenance and restoration of the city's historic buildings, sites, districts, structures and objects, all serving to enhance Bellingham's authenticity and sense of place.

The Bellingham Arts Commission serves as an advisor and advocate for the enhancement and integration of the arts in the community, and seek to provide opportunities for an enriched and diverse cultural experience. They also serve to:

- Raise public awareness of the need to integrate aesthetic aspects of design into the cityscape.
- Establish and maintain communication systems within the arts community so that activities can be identified and coordinated among public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals concerned with the arts.
- Develop a broad base of financial support for local arts and artists through public agencies and private donations and through a "percentage and/or a per capita for the arts" program.
- Develop strong relationships with the City of Bellingham, including the Mayor, Council members and City departmental representatives, serving as consultative resource on matters of aesthetic and artistic importance.
- Contribute to the economic vitality of the community by working with Planning and Community Development, the Tourism commission, The Port of Bellingham and other agencies, businesses and organizations to integrate arts into the downtown / waterfront areas and all public projects throughout the City.
- Advise the City on art acquisitions, historic landmarks, and citywide art issues.

The **Bellingham Tourism Commission** is responsible for giving recommendations to the Mayor and City Council regarding policies, programs and activities which enhance the tourism and visitor industry within the city and the surrounding area, and to report annually on progress. A Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) of the Commission advise the Mayor and City Council on the appropriation of the annual investment of lodging tax revenues. LTAC members include three representatives from the hotel industry, three representatives of agencies that qualify to use lodging tax, and is chaired by the City Council Finance Committee Chair.

As outlined in their 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, Tourism Commission goals include:

1) Community Development: as needed, discuss and make recommendations to the City to advocate for the protection and enhancement of tourism assets in various City planning documents that address issues within the Bellingham city limits (e.g. master plans, neighborhood plans, economic development plans, waterfront/shoreline plans, etc.).
2) Economic Development: encourage and advocate for the growth and development of diverse tourism businesses that reflect the community's values and assets.
3) Legislative Advocacy: work to assure that the best interests of Bellingham's tourism industry are represented in the consideration of any legislation that could directly or indirectly affect that industry.
4) Funding Sustainability: recommends and supports programs that ensure the continued sustainability of the lodging tax revenues.[1]

[1] https://www.cob.org/documents/planning/boards-commissions/tourism/strategic-plan.pdf

APPENDIX C:
STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHT PROJECTS

(Generated at 4/28/17 Meeting)

Short Term Projects (6-12 months):

- Set up monthly CHT meetings – all welcome, no agenda – to share information, build partnerships, etc.
- Education about how to create experiences people want. Lummi has a Cultural Committee that gives input on what we can share and what we can't. Would like to work on story poles interpretation
- Younger generation education. Could find ways to integrate the native experience. Newer generations need to be more active, engaged in experience (how can current cultural and heritage experiences change to be relevant, valued)
- Create "if you enjoyed this, then visit XYZ" lists at all museums, attractions. If you enjoyed this museum, you may also enjoy… (for departing guests)
- Focus on what will sustain forever – Smart Phone App with popups to tell you what's near, about history, link to information – all information into online platform – combined messaging (with augmented reality)
- Free wifi access is important – Canadians turn off phone once across border to avoid roaming charges
- Organization with clear leadership – lots of idea makers in room, how to convert into projects, implementation
- Inventory map GIS; organization resource sharing/selling
- GPS – place-based info. Geotargeting. RFID, augmented reality platforms
- Combined offer/ messaging – cross marketing (especially at arts district)
- Shared loyalty program for venues (passports and stamps)
- Power of YouTube – wealth of students who want to act. students at Western are film minors (great producers)
- Passports with stamps
- Wayfinding – Cascade loop (identity) Create a Whatcom Loop (similar to Cascade Loop)
- Historical society website – promote as it includes all
- One page link to all other pages
- Arts & culture magazines
- strengthen connections between Downtown Bellingham Partnership and the Historic Fairhaven Association. Learn from each other, cross cross-pollinate promote, promote stays in Fairhaven with visits downtown

Long-Range Projects (3-5 years):

- Partner in programming - Create a City Arts Pass? – multiple organizations/ experiences in one program
- Identify, map and improve interpretation of the many story poles throughout Whatcom County. Make a cohesive a "story trail" throughout the county. Link/connect with other public art maps throughout county
- Targeted audiences – kid-friendly list/packages; suggested itineraries for each target market to achieve desired outcomes, deliverables; pet friendly itineraries. Collaborate on activities for demographics (kid-friendly guide)
- Aggregating existing information into user- friendly documents/ content to share with visitors
- Sister Cities – business development opportunity; opportunity to reach international audiences
- Lummi Cultural Museum – old movies interpret traditions; ask artists to be involved. Example: Vancouver Cultural Olympiad (at waterfront?), Story Pole hunt, stories. Interpret stories – cultural dept. wats to do this
- Map of sites for events - Inventory of locations for events – provide to meeting/event planners
- Shuttle (from hotel) to various places – Ferndale, Fairhaven, downtown Bellingham; trolley? Define whether cost effective, enough usage to warrant; where is WTA – public transport – and can they offer a special "visitor access pass"? Shuttles from hotels to downtown Bellingham, Shuttle from Bellingham to Lynden, etc.
- Waterfront - transient moorage for ships, boats, etc. - multiple uses
- Uber – Now! Itinerary with personal guide Promote Uber more
- What to do if you only have 4 hours or 12 hours or 48 hours, What to do 5 miles off the freeway
- Cultural Access Washington Act – tax opportunity for county-wide tax levy on property, sales tax to use funds annually for access, outreach - can also be for city passage – implemented in Denver, Illinois – resources for certain underserved populations. County is interested – have someone follow up to move the process along

Desired Partnerships / Stakeholders:

City of Bellingham Parks & Recreation Department

Programming Coordinator for parks, Woodstock Farm Events Coordinator - Master Plan for Woodstock Farm – more programing, events, access

Whatcom County Parks & Recreation Department

Port of Bellingham

Birch Bay Tourism / Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX D:
STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY GROUP PLEDGES

Stakeholder Pledges 4/28/17

Susie Purves **Pickford Film Center**

- willing to attend meetings, help with organizing and communicating, brainstorming and planning
- will dedicate time and resources, thinking
- interested in funding opportunities

Hafthor Yngvason **WWU Western Gallery and Outdoor Sculpture**

- willing to participate in planning identity & website

Kelly Hart **Allied Arts of Whatcom County**

- whatever we can do to help

Louise Mugar **Point Roberts Press**

- help communicate to our readers & visitors the CHT opportunities in WC

Beth Joffrion **WWU Heritage Resources**

- can offer advice on grants & funding, offer historical context & resources for project goals
- networking and connections to other heritage organizations and WWU

Christian Martin **North Cascades Institute**

- interested in sharing information about E. whatcom co and Cascades National Park

Steve Paus **Historic Fairhaven Association**

- would like to help with planning for waterfront access and linking heritage with new development

Debbie Harger **Blaine Chamber of Commerce**

- continue to collaborate with this group & assist to complete cultural heritage sites in WC.
- will work with the community of Blaine to develop identified cultural heritage sites to "visitor ready", signage - current involvement - marketing - ultimately for E.D. in Blaine and revitalization of downtown

Shu-Ling Hergenhahn-Zhao **Sylvia Center for the Arts**

- would like to participate by staying in formed as plans move forward, actively engage in planning, network with other arts organizations to connect them with CHT, actively create experiences for tourists, work to cross-pollinate with other organizations and businesses to build CHT in Whatcom County.

Wes Davis **Sylvia Center for the Arts**

- can assist and collaborate in marketing / design consultation, web development consultation, moral support, brainstorming, millennial insights, and building arts district partnerships

Janet Rogerson **Washington State Historical Society**

- can attend Advisory meetings, participate in strategic planning.
- will be retiring end of october 2017 and would like to get more involved.

Teresa Taylor **Lummi Nation**

- participate in development and implementation of action plan.

- coordinate lummi Nation sharing of cultural heritage.
- help identify & apply for funding

Ann Serwold Ferndale Chamber of Commerce

- can attend meetings, share the Ferndale story, work to do what I can from my position.
- promotion of avenues to reach culture, heritage, arts, etc. look to work with lummi nation on finding ways to tell their story, share it. \
- willing to do more as needs are presented

Christina Claassen Whatcom Museum

- participate in committee / planning
- investigate specific partnering / branding opportunities, such as loyalty programs, shared collateral and messaging, and/or creating and aggregating itineraries
- collaboration with other organizations on creating packages, experiences, and/or partnerships

Andrew McKinley & Troy Luginbill Lynden Pioneer Museum

- consultation, active participation.
- cooperation on any and all promotional or inter organization actions

Annette Bagely Bellingham/Whatcom County Tourism

- Collaboration meetings

Pete Granger SeaFeast

- Willing to make time to attend meetings, integration with seafeast planning

Amy Guerra Mount Baker Theatre

- Messaging through channels of MBT organization
- Shared / included offerings when a fit with other
- Outreach to bigger partners (airlines, cruise tours, etc)
- Potentially programmatic support through festivals, etc. if we determine common goals / voice
    - Consideration of community loyalty platform

Cultural Heritage Tourism Asset Inventory

August 31, 2017

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	**Company Name**	**Phone**	**Street Address**	**City**	**State**	**Zip**	**Website**	**Email**	**Days/Hours of Operation**	**Ready?**
2	Whatcom Museum - Old City Hall	360-778-8930	121 Prospect Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.whatcommuseum.org	museuminfo@cob.org	Wed-Sun (12 p.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
3	Whatcom Museum - Lightcatcher	360-778-8930	250 Flora Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://whatcommuseum.org/about/buildings/lightcatcher/	museuminfo@cob.org	Wed-Sat (10 a.m.-5 p.m.), Sun (12 p.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
4	Mount Baker Theatre	360-733-5793	104 N Commercial Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.mountbakertheatre.com	tickets@mountbakertheatre.com	Select dates and times	Yes
5	Spark Museum of Electrical Invention	360-738-3886	1312 Bay Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.sparkmuseum.org	tana@sparkmuseum.org	Wed-Sun (11 a.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
6	Mindport Exhibits	360-647-5614	210 W Holly Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.mindport.org		Wed-Fri (12 p.m.-6 p.m.), Sat (10 a.m.-5 p.m.), Sun (12 p.m.-4 p.m.), Mon & Tue Closed	Yes
7	Allied Arts of Whatcom County	360-676-8548	1418 Cornwall Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.alliedarts.com	alliedarts@alliedarts.com	Mon-Fri (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) , Sat (12 a.m.-5 p.m.), Sun Closed	Yes
8	Artwood Gallery	360-647-1628	1000 Harris Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.artwoodgallery.com	info@artwoodgallery.com	Mon-Sat (11 a.m.-6 p.m.), Sun (11 a.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
9	Bellingham Arts Academy for Youth	360-306-8531	1059 N State St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.baay.org/	officemanager@baay.org	Select dates and times	
10	Bellingham Bells	360-527-1035	1220 Civic Field Way	Bellingham	WA	98229	www.bellinghambells.com	stephanie@bellinghambells.com	Annual, summer months	Yes
11	Bellingham Farmers Market									
12	Bellingham Festival of Music	360-201-6621	PO Box 818	Bellingham	WA	98227	www.bellinghamfestival.org	bellinghamfestival@comcast.net	Annual, several weeks over summer	Yes
13	Bellingham International Maritime Museum	360-592-4112	800 Cornwall Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.bellinghammaritimemuseum.org/	info@bellinghammaritimemuseum.org	Sat (12 p.m.-3 p.m.)	?
14	Bellingham Railway Museum	360-393-7540	1320 Commercial Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.bellinghamrailwaymuseum.org	bellinghamrailwaymuseum@gmail.com	Tue-Sat (12 p.m.-5 p.m.), Sun & Mon Closed	Yes
15	Bellingham Slam	360-734-7526	No office				http://www.bellinghamslam.com/	admin@bellinghamslam.com	Annual, summer months	?
16	Bellingham Theatre Guild	360-733-1811	1600 H Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.bellinghamtheatreguild.com	BTGuild@comcast.net	Thurs-Sat (7:30 p.m.), Sun (2 p.m.)	Yes
17	Bergsma Warehouse Showroom	360-733-1101	1301 Fraser Street	Bellingham	WA	98229	www.bergsma.com	bergsma@bergsma.com	Showroom: Mon-Thurs (10 a.m.-5 p.m.), Office: Mon-Thurs (9 a.m.-5 p.m.)	?
18	Good Time Girls Walking Tours	360-389-3595		Bellingham	WA	98225	goodtimegirlstours.com/	goodtimegirlstours@gmail.com	Fri and Sat evenings, summer months	Yes
19	Chuckanut Gallery - Retail	360-734-4885	700 Chuckanut Dr. N	Bellingham	WA	98229	http://www.chuckanutbaygallery.com/		Mon-Sat (10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.), Sun (11 a.m.-5:30 p.m.)	Yes
20	Claire De Lune Lynden Music Festival	360-510-0654	655 Front St - Suite 14	Lynden	WA	98264	www.lyndenmusicfestival.com	lyndenmusicfestival@gmail.com	Oct 9 & 10 (10 a.m.-12 p.m.), Oct 11 (10 a.m.-12 p.m.) & (4 p.m. recital)	?
21	Claire VG Thomas Theatre	360-354-4425	655 Front Street	Lynden	WA	98264	www.clairevgtheatre.com		varies	?
22	Commecial Street Night Market	360-527-8710	1300 Commercial St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://downtownbellingham.com/commercial-street-night-market/	info@downtownbellingham.com	Annual, May-Sept (3rd Friday of the month 6 p.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
23	Creative Life Adventures NW	360-510-9819/360-30	1893 Kelly Rd	Bellingham	WA	98226	www.creativelifeadventuresnw.com	derek@creativelifeadventuresnw.com	Select dates and times	Yes
24	CreativiTea - Retail	360-752-1724	1312 11th St	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.creativitea.com	paintpottery@gmail.com	Mon-Thurs (10 a.m.-9 p.m.), Fri & Sat (10 a.m.-10 p.m.), Sun (11 a.m.-6 p.m.)	Yes
25	Deming Log Show	360-592-3051	3295 Cedarville Rd.	Bellingham	WA	98226	http://demingloggingshow.com/	info@demingloggingshow.com	Annual, select dates and times	Yes
26	Downtown Sounds	360-527-8710	1310 Commercial St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://downtownbellingham.com/home/		Annual, select dates and times	Yes
27	Dirty Dan Days	360-220-6733	Mill Ave. & 10th St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	https://www.fairhaven.com/event/annual-dirty-dan-harris-festival/	festival@fairhaven.om	Annual, select date and time	Yes
28	Fairhaven Famer's Market	360-647-2060	1100 Railroad Ave.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.bellinghamfarmers.org/	market@bellinghamfarmers.org	Annual, select dates and times	Yes
29	Fairhaven Pharmacy Museum	360-734-3340	1115 Harris Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://activerain.com/blogsview/613579/fairhaven-s--underground--museum		By appointment only	?
30	Fairhaven Firehouse PAC	360-734-2776	1314 Harris Ave.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.appleseedmac.com/firehouse/		Daily (7 a.m.-4 p.m.)	Yes
31	Ferndale Heritage Society/ Pioneer Park	360-384-6461	2004 Cherry Street	Ferndale	WA	98248	www.ferndaleheritagesociety.com	park@ferndaleheritagesociety.com	May 15-Sept 15 (11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.), Mon Closed	Yes
32	Fisherman's Cove Marina	360-758-2450	2557 Lummi View Drive	Bellingham	WA	98226			Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	?
33	Gallery West - Retail	360-734-8414	1300 12th Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.artgallerywest.com/	art@artgallerywest.com	Mon-Sat (10 a.m.-6 p.m.), Sun (11:30 a.m.-4 p.m.)	Yes
34	Glen Echo Garden	360-592-5380	4390 Y Road	Bellingham	WA	98226	www.glenechogarden.com	fishnsew@yahoo.com	Mon-Sat (10 a.m.-6 p.m.), Sun Closed	Yes
35	Good Earth Pottery - Retail	360-671-3998	1000 Harris Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.goodearthpots.com	theteam@goodearthpots.com	Mon-Sat (11 a.m.-6 p.m.), Sun (12 p.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
36	Hovander Homestead Bluegrass Festival	360-474-7715	PO Box 29963	Bellingham	WA	98228	http://www.hhbgf.org/		Annual, Labor Day Weekend	Yes
37	iDiOM Theater	360-305-3524	205 Prospect St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.idiomtheater.com	info@idiomtheater.com	Annual, select dates and times	?
38	Jansen Art Center	360-354-3600	321 Front Street	Lynden	WA	98264	www.jansenartcenter.org	info@jansenartcenter.org	Tues-Sat (9 a.m.-5 p.m.), Thurs (9 a.m.-7 p.m.), Sun & Mon Closed	Yes
39	Jerns Military History Museum	360-734-0070	800 E Sunset Drive	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://jernsfuneralchapel.net/1/Home.html	info@jernsfuneralchapel.net	Mon-Fri (8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.), Weekends by appointment	?
40	Lake Whatcom Railway Co.	360-441-0719	5159 N.P. Road	Sedro Woolley	WA	98284	www.lakewhatcomrailway.com		Select dates and times	?
41	Lynden Pioneer Museum	360-354-3675	217 Front Street	Lynden	WA	98264	www.lyndenpioneermuseum.com/		Mon-Sat (10 a.m.-4 p.m.), Sun Closed	Yes
42	Make. Shift Project	360-933-1849	306 Flora St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	https://www.makeshiftproject.com/		Tue-Sat (12 p.m.-5 p.m.) Sun & Mon Closed	?
43	Masquerade Wine Company	360-220-7072	3950 Hammer Drive Suite 101	Bellingham	WA	98226	www.masqueradewines.com	info@masqueradewines.com	Daily (11 a.m.-6 p.m.)	Yes
44	Miniature World Family Fun Center	360-371-7700	4620 Birch Bay Lynden Rd.	Blaine	WA	98230	www.miniatureworld.org/	info@miniatureworld.org	Sat & Sun (11 a.m.-7 p.m.)	Yes
45	M.V. Plover Ferry	360-332-4544	728 Peace Portal Dr.	Blaine	WA	98230	http://www.draytonharbormaritime.com/plover.html		Annual, Memorial Day Weekend-Labor Day Weekend Fri & Sat (12 p.m.-8 p.m.) Sunday (10 a.m.-6 p.m.)	Yes
46	North Cascades Institute	360-854-2599	810 SR 20	Sedro-Woolley	WA	98284	www.ncascades.org	info@ncascades.org	Daily (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.), Sat & Sun Closed	Yes
47	Northwest Washington Fair	360-354-4111	1775 Front Street	Lynden	WA	98264	www.northwestwashingtonfair.org	info@nwwafair.com	Annual, select dates and times	Yes
48	Opus Performing Arts	360-734-5300	114 W Holly St	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.opusbellingham.com/	opusperformingarts@gmail.com	Mon (8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m.), Tue & Wed (9 a.m.-8:30 p.m.), Thurs (8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m.), Fri (4 p.m.-7 p.m.), Sat (10 a.m.-	?
49	Pax Gallery	360-332-1867	373 Martin St.	Blaine	WA	98230	http://paxartgallery.com/		By appointment only	?
50	Pedal Party NW	360-255-0822	501 Meador Street Suite 106	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.pedalpartynw.com	letsride@pedalpartynw.com	By appointment only	?
51	PFC's Limelight Cinema	360-738-0735	1416 Cornwall Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.pickfordfilmcenter.org/about/limelight		Mon-Fri (3:30 p.m.-show end, Sat & Sun (12 p.m.-show end)	Yes
52	Pickett House	360-733-5873	910 Bancroft Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.bellingham.org/insider-blogs/pickett-house-historical-treasure-bellingham/	daughtersofpioneers@hotmail.com	Public tours second Sunday of the month (1 p.m.-4 p.m.), private tours by appointment	?
53	Pickford Film Center	360-647-1300	1318 Bay Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.pickfordfilmcenter.org	info@pickfordfilmcenter.org	Daily (30 mins prior to first showing)	Yes
54	Schooner Zodiac	206-719-7622	355 Harris Ave. STE 104	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://schoonerzodiac.com/		Mon-Fri (8 a.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
55	Sculpture Northwest	360-734-9757	Big Rock Garden Park	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.sculpturenorthwest.org	info@sculpturenorthwest.org	Wed-Sat (12 p.m.-5 p.m.)	Yes
56	SeaFeast	360-223-3994		Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.bellinghamseafeast.com/		Annual, select date and time	Yes
57	Semiahmoo Park Maritime Museum	360-332-4544	9261 Semiahmoo Parkway	Blaine	WA	98230	http://www.threesheetsnw.com/maritimeheritage/attractions/semiahmoo-park-maritime-museum/	rcs3-dhm@comcast.net	Daily (sunrise to sunset)	Yes
58	SIMA - Sumas International Motorsport Academy	360-988-5104	529 West Front Street	Sumas	WA	98290	www.simaracing.com	info@simaracing.com	Thurs-Sun (10 a.m.-5 p.m.), Mon & Tues Closed	Yes
59	Ski to Sea	360-746-8861	2227 Queen St.	Bellingham	WA	98229	http://skitosea.com/	info@skitosea.com	Mon-Fri (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) Event: (select dates and times)	Yes
60	Social Fabric	360-733-1323	1302 N Commercial St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.socialfabricart.com/		Mon-Sat (11 a.m.-6 p.m.) Sun (11 a.m.-4 p.m.)	Yes
61	The Eureka Room	360-820-8216	1155 N State St.	Bellingham	WA	98226	http://www.theeurekaroombham.com/	info@theeurekaroombham.com	By appointment only (Mon & Tues Closed, Wed & Thurs (7 p.m. & 8:30 p.m.), Fri (5:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 8:30 p.m.), Sat &	?
62	The Shakedown	360-778-1067	1212 N State St	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.shakedownbellingham.com/	hollie@shakedownbellingham.com	Select dates and times	?
63	Upfront Theatre	360-733-8855	1208 Bay Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.theupfront.com	info@theupfront.com	Thurs, Fri, Sat, 8 pm and 10 pm	Yes
64	Uptown Art Studio	360-733-1471	800 Harris Ave. #101	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.uptownart.com/bellingham	robert@uptownart.com	Select dates and times	Yes
65	Wandering Oaks Fine Arts Gallery & Glass Studio	360-788-5454	126 W Holly Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://wanderingoaksgallery.com/	sheri@wanderingoaksgallery.com	Mon-Thurs & Sat (10 a.m.-6 p.m.), Fri (10 a.m.-7 p.m.), Sun (11 a.m.-4 p.m.)	Yes
66	WWU - Outdoor Sculpture Collection	360-650-3900	516 High Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	westerngallery.wwu.edu/sculpture.shtml		Daily (dawn to dusk)	Yes
67	WWU - Western Gallery	360-650-3963	516 High Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.westerngallery.wwu.edu/	hafthor.yngvason@wwu.edu	Summer hours: Wed (10 a.m.-8 p.m.), Thurs & Fri (10 a.m.-4 p.m.), Sat (12 p.m.-4 p.m.), Outdoor Sculpture Collection	Yes
68	WWU - Performing Arts Center	360-650-6146	516 High Street	Bellingham	WA	98225	pacseries.wwu.edu/		Select dates and times	Yes
69	Whatcom Artists' Studio Tour	360-734-9472	PO Box 5921	Bellingham	WA	98227	www.studiotour.net/	dancingdog@nas.com	First two weekends of October	Yes
70	Whatcom Events / Ski to Sea	360-746-8861	2227 Queen Street	Bellingham	WA	98229	www.skitosea.com	ski2searace@gmail.com	Sunday before Memorial Day	Yes
71	Whatcom Symphony Orchestra	360-756-6752	201 Grand Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98227	www.whatcomsymphony.com	info@whatcomsymphony.com	Sundays monthly Oct - May	Yes
72	Yvette Neumann Fine Art Studio & Gallery	360-510-9819	1893 Kelly Road	Bellingham	WA	98226	www.yvetteneumann.com	yvette@yvetteneaumann.com	By appointment only	?
73	**PARKS**									
74	Arroyo Park	360-778-7000	1700 Old Samish Road	Bellingham	WA	98229	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/arroyo-park.aspx	parks@cob.org	Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
75	Berthusen City Park, Lynden	360-354-2424/reserva	8837 Berthusen Road	Lynden	WA	98264	http://www.lyndenwa.org/departments/berthusen-park/	cityhall@lyndenwa.org	Office: Mon-Fri (9 a.m.-4 p.m.), Park: Daily (8 a.m.-dusk)	Yes
76	Big Rock Garden Park	360-778-7700	2900 Sylvan Street	Bellingham	WA	98226	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/big-rock.aspx	parks@cob.org	Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
77	Birch Bay State Park	reservations 360-371-	5105 Helweg Road	Blaine	WA	98230	http://parks.state.wa.us/170/Birch-Bay	parks@cob.org	Summer (6:30 a.m.-dusk), Winter (8 a.m.-dusk)	Yes
78	Blaine Birch Bay Park & Recreation District 2	360-656-6416	7511 Gemini Street	Blaine	WA	98230	http://www.bbbparkandrec.com/	info@bbbprd2.com	Mon-Fri (9 a.m.-5 p.m.), Sat (9 a.m.-4 p.m.), Sun Closed	Yes
79	Bloedel Donovan Park	360-778-7700	2214 Electric Street	Bellingham	WA	98229	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/bloedel-donovan-park.aspx		Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
80	Boulevard Park	360-778-7100	470 Bayview Road	Bellingham	WA	98226	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/boulevard-park.aspx		Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	YEs

Cultural Heritage Tourism Asset Inventory
August 31, 2017

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	**Company Name**	**Phone**	**Street Address**	**City**	**State**	**Zip**	**Website**	**Email**	**Days/Hours of Operation**	**Ready?**
81	Fairhaven Marine Park	360-676-2500	100 Harris Ave.	Bellingham	WA	98225	https://www.portofbellingham.com/505/Marine-Park---Fairhaven		Daily (6 a.m.- 7 p.m.)	Yes
82	Fairhaven Park	360-778-7100	107 Chuckanut Drive N	Bellingham	WA	98225	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/fairhaven-park.aspx		Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
83	Hovander Homestead Park	360-384-3444	5299 Neilsen Avenue	Ferndale	WA	98248	http://www.whatcomcounty.us/1957/Hovander-Homestead-Park		Daily (8 a.m.-4 p.m.)	Yes
84	Lake Padden	360-738-7400	4882 Samish Way	Bellingham	WA	98226	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/lake-padden-park.aspx	info@cob.org	Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
85	Lynden City Park	360-354-6717	8460 Depot Road	Lynden	WA	98264	http://www.lyndenwa.org/department-template/#citypark	cityhall@lyndenwa.org	Daily (8 a.m.-dusk)	Yes
86	Maritime Heritage Park	360-778-7000	500 W Holly St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/maritime-heritage-park.aspx	info@cob.org	Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	YEs
87	Sehome Hill Arboretum									Yes
88	Semiahmoo Park	360-384-3444	9261 Semiahmoo Parkway	Blaine	WA	98230	http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/2064/Semiahmoo-Park	parks@co.whatcom.wa.us	Daily (sunrise to sunset)	Yes
89	Silver Lake County Park	360-599-2776	9006 Silver Lake Road	Maple Falls	WA	98266	http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/1937/Silver-Lake-Park	parks@co.whatcom.wa.us	Park: Daily (dawn to dusk), Lodge/Office: (select dates and times)	Yes
90	Stimpson Family Nature Reserve	360-778-5850	2076 Lake Louise Road	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/2180/Stimpson-Family-Nature-Reserve	parks@co.whatcom.wa.us	Daily (sunrise to sunset)	Yes
91	Whatcom Falls Park	360-778-7000	1401 Electric Avenue	Bellingham	WA	98229	https://www.cob.org/services/recreation/parks-trails/Pages/whatcom-falls-park.aspx	info@cob.org	Daily (6 a.m.-10 p.m.)	Yes
92	Zuanich Point Park	360-676-2500	2600 Harbor Loop	Bellingham	WA	98226	https://www.portofbellingham.com/509/Zuanich-Point-Park		Daily (dawn to dusk)	Yes
93							***NEED MORE INFORMATION***			
94	Austin Pass Warming Hut	425-783-6000	Milepost 56, Mt. Baker Hwy SR	Glacier	WA	98244			Mid July-late Sept. (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)	
95	Beaver Pass Shelter				WA					
96	Bellingham Public Sculpture				WA					
97	BTC Public Sculpture	360-752-7000	3028 Lindbergh Ave.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.btc.edu/	btc@btc.edu	Annual, select date	
98	Chelhetenem				WA					
99	Copper Mt. Lookout				WA					
100	Deer Lick Cabin				WA					
101	Desolation Peak Lookout				WA					
102	Devil's Corner Cliff Walk				WA					
103	Diablo Hydroelectric Power Plant				WA					
104	Dirty Dan Guided Tours				WA					
105	Downtown Historic Commerical District				WA					
106	Fairhaven Historic Commerical District				WA		https://www.fairhaven.com/			
107	Fairhaven Library - Historic Building	360-778-7188	1117 12th St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org	bpl@cob.org	Mon & Tue (10 a.m.-2 p.m.) Wed-Fri (2 p.m.-6 p.m.) Sat (10 a.m.-6 p.m.)	
108	Federal Building	360-734-2980	104 W Magnolia	Bellingham	WA	98225			Mon-Fri (8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.) Closed Daily (12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. for lunch)	
109	Fish and Game-Hozemeen				WA					
110	Glacier Ranger Station				WA					
111	Gorge Hydroelectric Power Plant				WA					
112	Historic Cruise (summer only)				WA					
113	Historic Districts - six residential				WA					
114	International Art Festival at Peace Arch Park				WA					
115	Jazz Festival				WA					
116	Lynden Historic Commercial District				WA					
117	Middle Fork Nooksack River Bridge				WA					
118	Mt. Baker- Snoqualmie National Forest	360-599-2714	10091 Mt. Baker HWY	Glacier	WA	98244				
119	NEW City Hall				WA					
120	Newhalem/Diablo				WA					
121	Nooksack Falls Hydroelectric Power Plant				WA					
122	North Cascades National Park				WA					
123	Park Butte Lookout				WA					
124	Procession of the Species				WA					
125	Roader Home				WA					
126	Sehome Hill Arboretum				WA					
127	Skagit River and Newhalem Creek Hydroelectric Project				WA					
128	Sourdough Mt. Lookout				WA					
129	Subdued Stringband Jamboree				WA		http://www.stringbandjamboree.com/		Annual, select dates and times	
130	Sylvia Art Center		205 Prospect St.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://sylviacenterforthearts.org/		Select dates and times	
131	Territorial Courthouse - Historic Building				WA					
132	WCC Public Sculpture	360-734-9757	202 Prospect St. STE 101	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://www.sculpturenorthwest.org/public-sculpture/whatcom-county/366-whatcom-county-tour.html	info@sculpturenorthwest.org	Wed-Sat (12 p.m.-5 p.m.)	
133	Winchester Mt. Lookout				WA					
134	Woodstock Farm	360-778-7000	1200 Chuckanut Dr.	Bellingham	WA	98225	http://woodstockfarmconservancy.org/	info@woodstockfarmconservancy.org	Daily (dawn to dusk)	
135	WWU - Historic Campus Buildings				WA					

April 15, 2017

CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN: MARKET TRENDS AND SEGMENTATION REPORT

Prepared for:

City of Bellingham Planning & Community Development Department

By

Cheryl Hargrove, HTC Partners

HTC Partners
HERITAGE · TOURISM · CULTURE

This Market Trends and Segmentation Report is designed to inform Bellingham and Whatcom County on the potential audiences and segments most appropriate for the destination to grow cultural heritage tourism. The Assessment Report and Community Presentation (Phase 1) provided some initial research for consideration; this report delves more deeply into describing significant markets for Bellingham/ Whatcom County and consumer trends to watch.

1. Cultural Heritage Tourism Target Markets

In the community presentation on March 1, 2017, consultant Cheryl Hargrove defined the profile of the cultural heritage traveler. In addition to the general cultural heritage traveler, other potential audiences include general leisure travelers, nature-based/ adventure/ eco-tourists, regional visitors and generational audiences.

1.1. Cultural Heritage Traveler

Mandala Research, LLC produced the most recent national study on the profile and impact of the cultural heritage traveler in 2013. The report cites that 76% of all leisure travelers – or 129.6 million adults annually – engage in a cultural or heritage activity, spending $171 billion US. This study supported previous research reports profiling the cultural heritage traveler as:

- Older (49 vs. 47)
- More affluent
- Generally have higher education (many with graduate or higher level degrees)
- Likely to be Married or with a partner.

While baby boomers continue to dominate the market, Gen X are rapidly growing as a cultural heritage tourism segment. Multi-generational travel to historic and cultural attractions/ events is also on the rise. The 2013 Mandala Research Report also determined these desirable characteristics of the cultural heritage traveler:

- Cultural heritage travelers stay longer, spend more than general U.S. leisure travelers ($1,319 vs $820) and are more likely to stay in a hotel, motel or B&B
- Are frequent travelers – taking 3.61 leisure trips in the last three years (compared with 3.4 trips for the general leisure traveler)
- 46% of their total trip budget were spent on activities, dining & shopping
- 72% seek travel experiences where the destination, buildings and surroundings have retained their historical character
- 66% prefer leisure travel that is educational
- 52% spend more money on cultural and heritage activities while on their vacation/trip; and 49% will pay more for lodging that has a distinctive cultural or heritage component (historic building, local art or decor, architecture, etc.)

- A majority of cultural heritage travelers want to engage with locals and "do" something (preferring immersion and participation to being a spectator)

A 2009 Mandala Research Report revealed the top activities of cultural heritage travelers as:

1. Visiting historic sites (66%)
2. Participating in historical re-enactments (64%)
3. Visiting art museums/galleries (54%)
4. Attending an art/craft fair or festival (45%)
5. Attending a professional dance performance (44%)
6. Visiting state/national parks (41%)
7. Shopping in museum stores (32%)
8. Exploring urban neighborhoods (30%)

Cultural heritage tourism is not limited to domestic U.S. travelers. International travelers are also interested in U.S. cultural heritage. According to the *2015 Cultural Heritage Traveler* report produced by the National Travel and Tourism Office at the U.S. Department of Commerce, more than 22 million overseas visitors to the U.S. (excluding Canada and Mexico) engage in a cultural heritage activity – or 28% of all international inbound visitors. This represents a 56 percent increase from 2008 to 2015, with the majority (78 percent) of these visitors on vacation/holiday.[1] Like domestic tourists, shopping continues to be the number one activity for international tourists while in the United States. However, they traditionally favor – and participate in – cultural and heritage activities during their holiday here. Specifically,

- 61 percent visit National Parks/Monuments
- 50 percent visit art galleries or museums
- 46 percent visit historic locations (more than amusement/theme parks at 33%)
- 40 percent visit small towns/countryside
- 32 percent participate in a guided tour
- 28 percent attend concert/play/musical
- 28 percent visit cultural/ethnic heritage sites
- 9 percent visit an American Indian Communities.[2]

The Canadian Travel Activities and Motivations Survey (TAMS) provides some of the most relevant and current market research available for specific tourism segments, including the demographic profile of heritage travelers (US and Canadian). TAMS research profiling pleasure travelers to British Columbia 2007-2009 found a similar profile of the cultural heritage traveler to the Mandala Research LLC studies – educated, affluent – although the Canadian heritage travelers were younger with the largest group between ages of 18 to 34 (31% participated; 29% motivated by historic sites and museums). Those motivated by archeology and interpretive programs were more likely to be age 45-54.[3]

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[1] Preliminary "2015 Sector Report: Cultural Heritage Traveler" provided by National Travel and Tourism Office, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (August 2016)

[2] Preliminary "2015 Sector Report: Cultural Heritage Traveler" provided by National Travel and Tourism Office, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce (August 2016)

[3] Tourism British Columbia, Heritage Tourism Product Overview, April 2009

Aboriginal cultural tourism is strong in British Columbia totaling $42 million in 2011, up from $20 million in 2006. According to the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC), the average Aboriginal cultural tourism visitor to British Columbia tends to be female, middle to late aged, well-educated, and earns an upper-middle income. AtBC reports, "Aboriginal cultural tourism visitors under the age of 50 prefer active experiences such as canoeing, kayaking, dog-sledding and horseback riding, while visitors aged 50+ prefer less vigorous experiences such as hiking, walks, nature observation, and indoor activities."[4]

This clustering of preferred cultural heritage activities bodes well for Bellingham/Whatcom County as the destination offers all of these activities in its current visitor-ready wheelhouse.

1.2. General Leisure Travelers

For Bellingham and Whatcom County, nature and recreation are top motivators for visitation. However, culture and heritage activities can be a stimulus to extend length of stay, increase repeat visitation or serve as a catalyst for selecting a destination showcasing place-based authentic experiences. A 2009 PGAV Study conducted by Jerry Henry and Associates found that 80 percent of visitors like to visit places that are authentic.[5] The 2013 Mandala Research, LLC Study found that general leisure travelers often engaged in cultural heritage activities. Top activities included:

- Visited heritage buildings/historical buildings (42%)
- Attended cultural/heritage fair, festival (40%)
- Attended historical reenactments (38%)
- Participated in an organized tour of local history or culture (37%)
- Visited living history museums (37%)
- Took a tour focusing on local architecture (34%)
- Researched family history (32%)
- Shopped for items made by local artisans, craftspeople (31%)
- Visited farms and ranches (25%)
- Explored small towns (24%)
- Experienced local or regional cuisine for a unique and memorable experience (23%)
- Self guided walking tour (22%)

With a desire for more authentic experiences, a focus on health and well-being, and distinctive places to escape from everyday life, the outlook is positive for destinations that provide a balance of both nature-based and place-based (cultural heritage) experiences.

[4] Tourism Sector Profile, Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (May 2014), p2, http://www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Research/Research-by-Activity/All-Sector-Profiles/Aboriginal-Cultural-Tourism-Sector-Profile,-May-20/Tourism-Sector-Profile_AboriginalCulturalTourism_May2014.pdf.aspx

[5] Jerry Henry and Associates for PGAV Destinations (2009), Real Potential: The Power of Authenticity to Reposition Your Destination

Competitors for Leisure Time

The competition for leisure time and spending is intense. According to the American Time Use Survey (2015) by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly everyone age 15 and over (96%) engaged in some sort of leisure activity; the top three are watching TV (2.8 hours day), socializing (51 minutes), or participating in sports, exercise and recreation (29 minutes).[6]

The shift to use of electronics as leisure activities is highlighted in Nielsen's Total Audience Report where "Americans aged 18 and older spend more than 11 hours a day watching TV, listening to the radio or using smartphones and other electronic devices."[7]

1.3. Adventure/Nature-based/EcoTourists

Nature-based tourism simply describes travel to natural places. Nature-based visitors seek out destinations that care for and showcase natural attractions. Ecotourism, the most well-known segment of nature-based tourism, is now defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education."[8] According to The International Ecotourism Society:

- Eco-tourists are responsible consumers interested in social, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- They seek out authentic local experiences.
- Many eco-tourists use voluntourism activities as a way to give back to the communities they visit.
- Eco-tourists seek to minimize the carbon footprint of their travel, with climate in mind by planning wisely and choosing consciously.[9]

Adventure Travel is defined by nature + physical activity + culture. The U.S. Adventure Pulse recognizes five segments of leisure travel. One group is mass travelers (34%) not currently participating in adventure; another group are pre-adventurers or up-and-coming adventurers (14.4%) whom have tried an adventure activity as a secondary activity to a former trip. Three core adventure travel personas are: 1) 23.9% are adventure gazers; 2) 20% are adventurers; and 3) adventure enthusiasts (7.5%).

	Adventure Grazer	Adventurer	Adventure Enthusiast
Characteristics	Bucket list driven	Actively seeking to improve/enhance skills	Practice activities at high skill level
	Not likely to repeat activities once experiences	Repeat a favorite activity or activity on multiple trips	Accept higher risks to achieve greater thrill
	Perform at novice/beginner skill level	Perform at intermediate level	Dedicated to one activity

[6] "American Time Use Survey – 2015 Results", Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/atus.pdf
[7] Nielsen's Total Audience Report, Americans Use Electronic Media 11+ Hours a Day (Q4 2014), https://www.statista.com/chart/1971/electronic-media-use/
[8] The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) 2015
[9] Who are eco-tourists? TIES (nd) https://www.ecotourism.org/book/who-are-eco-tourists

	High thrill seeker	Moderate thrill seeker	Seek unique and new destinations to practice favorite activity
Motivations	Time to be with family	Relaxation	Exploring new places
	Exploring new places	Time to be with family	Exciting new activities
	Time to be with friends	Exploring new places	Relaxation

The Adventure Travel Trade Association, in partnership with Michigan State University, recently conducted a study to better understand the adventure traveler and their motivations. Transformation – in terms of personal growth and challenge, accomplishment/achievement, gratitude and mindfulness – ranked highest in motivations. Expanded Worldview – a "broadened perspective, expanded horizons, and cultural understanding" – ranked second, and Learning (new skills/knowledge, new experiences, enriching overall experience) ranked third.

Other important motivations include nature & discovery, mental health, fun & thrills, connection, meaningful stories, physical health, and unique experience. Whereas a 2005 survey of travelers mentioned "extreme, danger, exertion and power", the 2017 study shows travelers focusing on "a natural environment, learning, and meaningful experiences." According to the 2016 Industry Snapshot, customized trips remain in high demand. Activities such as cycling and cultural activities topped regional lists.[10] This provides an opportunity for Bellingham/Whatcom County to combine nature and culture to provide desired experiences and establish a distinctive destination brand.

Within the outdoor recreation space, the 2016 Outdoor Participation Report[11] cites adventure racing, non-traditional triathlon and trail running, paddle sports are some of the fastest growing sports (up 26 percent from 2012 to 2015) among youth and young adults. Kayak fishing and sea/tour kayaking saw big participation increased in the past three years. The report cites the *experience* as the reason for growth, "that people are looking for nonconventional ways to get in shape."[12]

- Nearly half of all Americans – 48.4% –participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2015.
- Outdoor participation is highest among Caucasians (71%) and lowest (per capita) among African Americans (11%).
- Asian/Pacific Islanders represent 7% of the U.S.' youth/young adults participating in outdoor activities.
- Hispanic American youth and young adults have one of the highest outdoor participation rates (12%), second only to Caucasian/White, non-Hispanic (71%).
- Running, including jogging and trail running, is the most popular activities among Americans when measured by number of participants and by number of total annual outings.
- Participants aged 6-24 from the Pacific Census Region grew one percent (14 percent to 15 percent) from 2014 to 2015. In 2015, 19 percent of the youth/young adult population residing in the South Atlantic region and 17 percent of this youth/young adult population from the East North Central region participated in outdoor activities.

[10] 2016 Industry Snapshot, Adventure Travel Trade Association, http://www.adventuretravel.biz/research/industry-snapshot-2016/
[11] 2016 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report, Outdoor Foundation, www.outdoorfoundation.org
[12] http://www.holabirdsports.com/blog/adventure-racing-is-one-of-the-fastest-growing-sports-in-us/

1.4. Generational Profiles: Millennials, Boomers, and Gen X

THE GENERATIONS DEFINED

The Millennial Generation
Born: 1981 to 1997
Age of adults in 2016: 19 to 35*

Generation X
Born: 1965 to 1980
Age in 2016: 36 to 51

The Baby Boom Generation
Born: 1946 to 1964
Age in 2016: 52 to 70

The Silent Generation
Born: 1928 to 1945
Age in 2016: 71 to 88

The Greatest Generation
Born: Before 1928
Age in 2016: 86 to 101

*No chronological end point has been set for this group.
Source: Pew Research Center

Much has been studied and written about the generations of today. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Millennials surpassed Baby Boomers as the nation's largest living generation in 2016. Each of these demographic markets has specific psychographic and behavioral characteristics. These markets are profiled and analyzed below to help assess their potential for Bellingham/Whatcom County, with a lens on motivations and expectations.

Millennials (Gen Y) in the U.S. now number 75.4 million. This growth is due in part to young immigrants. The Millennial population is projected to peak in 2036 at 81.1 million. By 2050 there will be a projected 79.2 million Millennials.[13]

- They comprise 24% of the US population.
- Median income for younger Millennials is $25,000, while older Millennials make almost double ($48,000).
- Only 21% are married.
- They are the most educated generation; 23% have a bachelor's degree or higher; 38% are bilingual.
- Most ethnically and racially diverse generation, 19% of Millennials are Hispanic, 14% African-American, and 5% Asian.
- Two in three Millennials are U.S.-born; 11% are born to at least one immigrant parent.
- Millennials account for one-fifth of same-sex couples.
- Top 10 markets by concentration for Millennials are primarily in the Western part of the country (Austin, Salt Lake City, San Diego, Los Angeles, Denver, Washington, Houston, Las Vegas, San Francisco, Dallas-Fort Worth).[14]

According to MMGY Global, "nearly 60 percent of Millennials would rather spend money on experiences than on material goods." **Dollar-wise, that translates to the average millennial traveler planning to spend about $5,300 per trip**.[15] One unique characteristic of Millennials is the desire to stay connected while traveling, using technology not only for on-site trip planning but also for recording experiences and sharing with others via social media.

The U.S. Chamber Foundation prepared "The Millennial Generation Research Review" to profile this cohort. The study uses birth years of 1980 to 1999 to define the Millennial generation (different from the Pew Research Center above.) Millennials are:

- Technically savvy, as they have only known a wired, connected world

[13] Pew Research Center, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/
[14] Neilsen, http://www.marketingcharts.com/traditional/demographic-stats-about-us-millennials-40016/
[15] As reported by Roesler, P. (May 2015) "Mobile Technology and Future of Travel" *Inc.com*, http://www.inc.com/peter-roesler/mobile-technology-and-future-of-travel.html

- Optimistic, despite tragic events that have shaped this generation (9/11, terrorist attacks, school shootings, tsunami and hurricanes
- More tolerant of races and groups
- Considered multi-taskers
- More caring, community oriented and politically engaged, although they are also described as overly self-confident and self-absorbed
- Masters of self-expression, with 75% creating a profile on a social networking site, 20% posting personal video, 38% with one to six tattoos, and 23% with a piercing in some place other than an earlobe. Trend toward personal branding
- Main sources for news are television (65%) and Internet (59%). Also influenced by parents (61%)
- 13% live with parents (a boomerang effect of the recession) and 36% depend on financial support from families[16]
- Biggest objective for young adults today, both male and female, is happiness; this generation is trading in money and power in favor of love and friendship
- Millennials (and increasingly other generations) use "Facebook, Twitter, and other tools to self-organize and participate in causes they care about; they simply are not as interested in joining established member-based organizations."
- Further, they have "little patience for the speed to which things get done and may not see the value in becoming a member of what they see as inefficient organizations[17]
- In the area of fundraising, Millennial donors blend their preference for technology with a desire for personal, traditional giving requests.
- They use online tools to make their donations, but need to trust the organizations to which they are donating and feel that they have a compelling mission or cause, and tend to give one time for a specific cause or event versus annually. Millennials tend to give smaller donations to a number of organizations; 20-somethings donate on average to 3.6 groups.[18]

Additional statistics using Nielsen data from 2013 describe some of the behavioral and psychographic characteristics of Millennials:[19]

- 52% of Millennials consider being a good parent important
- Roughly a quarter of Millennials will try a brand or product that sponsors a music event for an artist or group they like
- Sponsoring a concert increases purchase rate over 25% among Millennial fans
- Artist endorsement increases brand market share up to 2.4 points among Millennial fans
- 75% of Millennials have made a financial donation to a not-for-profit organization
- 71% of Millennials have raised money for a not-for-profit organization
- 57% of Millennials have volunteered for a not-for-profit organization
- Over 60% of Millennials will pay more for a product where the company is environmentally friendly.

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[16] "The Millennial Generation Research Review", U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review

[17] *Professional Associations – Key Findings*, "The Millennial Generation Research Review", U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review

[18] *Note on the Millennial Donor* "The Millennial Generation Research Review", U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review

[19] Cohen, H. "30 Millennial Demographics You Need" (February 2014) http://heidicohen.com/30-millennial-demographics-chart/

Marketing to Millennials: Millennials' direct purchasing power is estimated at "$200 billion, and $500 billion of indirect spending, largely due to the influence on the spending of their mostly baby boomer parents. "[20] Key findings and recommendations from U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's *The Millennial Generation Research Review* "Marketplace" section include:

- The majority of Millennials use social media to connect with brands; they spend about 1.8 hours daily on social media sites. 80% sleep with their cell phone next to their bed
- They also connect to a brand through affiliation with a cause, more important to Millennials than previous generations
- Advertising should be placed around engaging content. Engagement is higher among Millennials than other generations for television and particularly websites
- Due to technology and access to information, marketing communication is a two-way street, with 86% of Millennials willing to share information about their brand preferences online
- They are more likely to use the Internet, broadcast thoughts, and contribute content (60%) than other generations
- They also rely on recommendations from peers and friends more than experts
- Mobile devices are used to read reviews and explore information on social networks; "Having grown up with mobile and digital technology as part of their everyday lives, they switch their attention between media platforms 27 times per hour"[21]
- Traditional gender distinctions no longer apply, with more "stay at home" dads and women in sports.

Baby Boomers, defined by the boom in U.S. births following World War II, were the largest generation and peaked at 78.8 million in 1999. They remain an important market, especially for travel, due to their size (74.9 million) and wealth.[22] Boomers have the highest concentration of the super-affluent ($5 to %25 million in investible assets) and ultra-affluent (more than $25 million) of any generation.[23] This market is exploration hungry, interested in culture, wants the real destination (not commercial tourism product), loves nature, is driven by food and cuisine, and considered activity seekers.[24]

Baby Boomers spend $157 billion on trips each year and many polls rank travel as this market's No.1 leisure activity.[25] Boomers are active travelers, taking an

2015 Traveler Audience Profiles

	International Traveler	Domestic Traveler	World Traveler
Base:	26	448	345
AARP Membership	(a)	(b)	(c)
Member	40%	52%	60%b
Non-Member	60%	48%c	40%
Gender			
Male	26%	48%	48%
Female	74%	52%	52%
Age			
45 - 49	-	-	-
50 - 59	61%	44%c	32%
60 - 69	19%	34%	41%
70+	20%	22%	27%
Ethnicity			
Caucasian/Other	52%	80%	74%
Black	4%	10%	11%
Hispanic	19%	8%	10%
Asian	25%	2%	6%b
Income			
Average	$91k	$82k	$102k
Marital Status			
Single/Never Married	11%	6%	7%
Married/Living Together	54%	75%	79%
Divorced/Seperated	31%	12%	9%
Widow	4%	7%	5%

[20] "The Millennial Generation Research Review", U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review
[21] "The Millennial Generation Research Review", U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/reports/millennial-generation-research-review
[22] Pew Research Center, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/
[23] Goldberg, B. *The Truth About How Different Generations Travel,* Virtuoso Luxury Traveler (May 2015) http://blog.virtuoso.com/traveler_trends/the-truth-about-how-different-generations-travel/
[24] http://www.statista.com/statistics/318071/profile-of-baby-boomer-travelers-in-the-us/
[25] Gerber, S. Next Avenue Living & Learning channel, The Hottest Trends in Boomer Travel (August 2013) http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/08/01/the-hottest-trends-in-boomer-travel/#3316f10b2cd4

average of 4 -5 trips per year. More than half (55%) of Boomers will travel only within the U.S.; 91% have vacation time available, and 51% will use all of it.

The top motivators for personal travel are to:

- Get away from normal, everyday life (57%)
- Spend time with family and friends (55%)
- Relax and rejuvenate (54%)

64% Baby Boomers are primarily looking for a laid back and relaxing trip (70% of GenXers want to relax); 16% of Baby Boomers seek adventurous/outdoors trips, and only 7% seek educational domestic trips. [26]

Multigenerational trips are increasing in importance, with 32% of Boomers planning this type of domestic trip. Other top types of trips include: summer vacation (30%), weekender (26%), holiday travel (22%), celebration vacation (17%), family reunion (17%) and romantic getaway (15%). A city/town is the most popular domestic destination.[27]

Gen X are the smallest of the generations, as the span is shorter (16 years) compared with Millennials (17 years). They were also born during a period when Americans were having fewer children (3.4 million per year, compared with 3.9 million when Millennials were born.) Gen X is anticipated to pass the Boomers in population by 2028.[28]

Average spending per day on vacation:

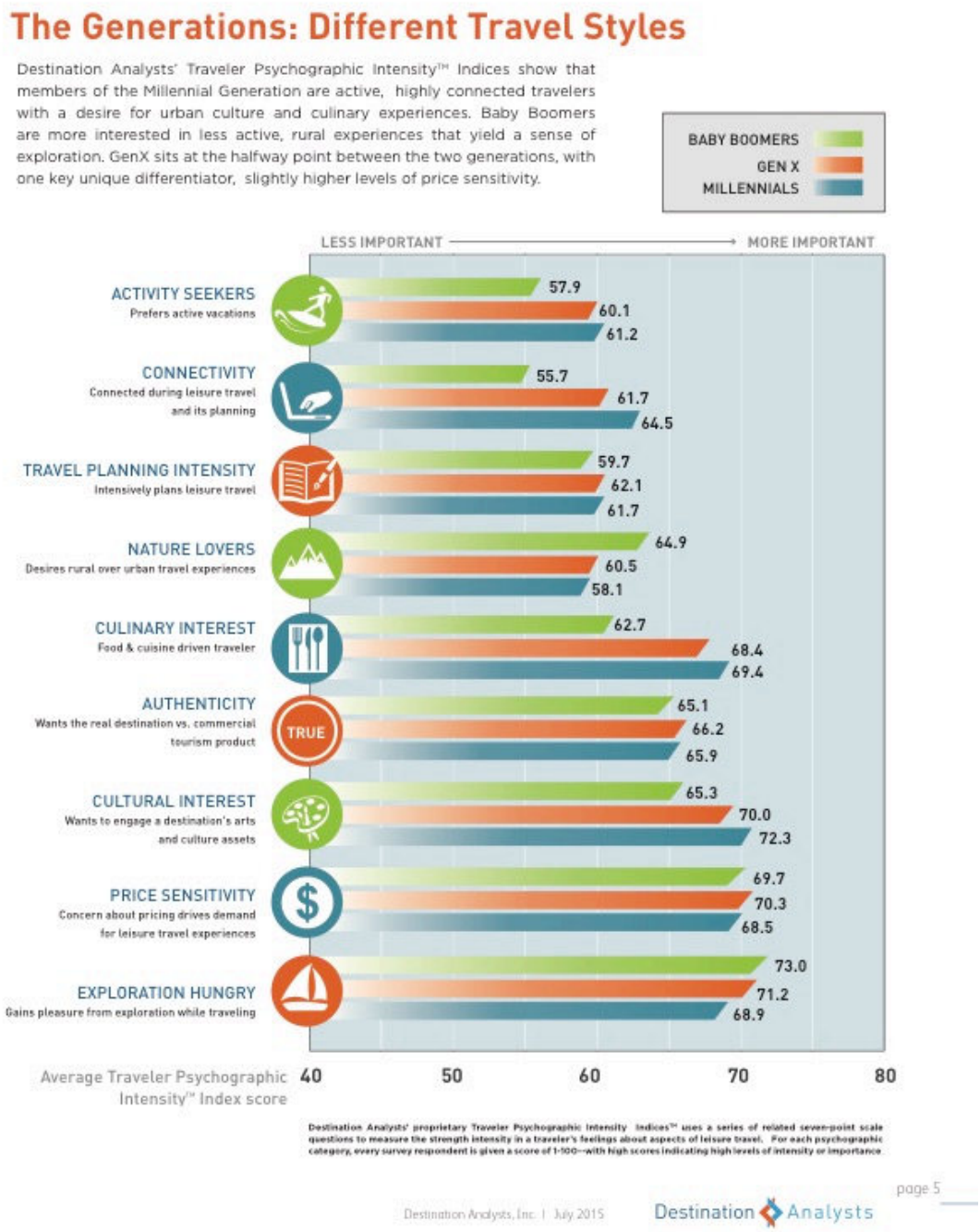
Millennials	$527
Gen X	$627
Baby Boomers	$522
Matures	$471

Source: http://blog.virtuoso.com/traveler_trends/the-truth-about-how-different-generations-travel/

The travel profile of Gen X is similar to Baby Boomers, with interest in exploration, culture, authenticity and cuisine. Gen X rate "nature lovers" as a 60.5 on Statista's Average Traveler Psychographic Intensity Index Score.[29]

Family life shapes travel preferences for Generation X. Timing vacations along school calendars, many trips are closer to home – favoring beach-oriented vacations. They want/ need time to relax and unwind, where the top priority is a hotel stay. According to MMGY, 82% book travel online and 71% research travel through their Online Travel Agencies (Expedia, Travelocity, etc.)[30]

[26] AARP 2015 Boomer Travel Trends, http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/general/2014/AARP-2015-Boomer-Travel-Trends-AARP-res-gen.pdf
[27] http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/general/2014/AARP-2015-Boomer-Travel-Trends-AARP-res-gen.pdf
[28] Pew Research Center, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/
[29] http://www.statista.com/statistics/318088/profile-of-generation-x-travelers-in-the-us/
[30] Goldberg, B. *The Truth About How Different Generations Travel,* Virtuoso Luxury Traveler (May 2015) http://blog.virtuoso.com/traveler_trends/the-truth-about-how-different-generations-travel/



1.5. Families

Families seek value and unique experiences in tour packages. The family vacation is becoming the new family dinner table: with our time-impoverished society, families need to make extra effort to spend quality time together.[31]

[31] Family & Multigenerational Travel Market, National Tour Association, http://www.ntaonline.com/includes/media/docs/Family-Travel---NTA.pdf

- 44% of all leisure travelers brought kids along on trips[32]
- 40% of all active leisure travelers have taken at least one multi-generational trip (defined as a trip with three or more generations present) during the previous 12 months[33]
- Grandparents make up 26% of all leisure travelers in America and a third took at least one leisure trip with grandchildren last year[34]
- What kids want when traveling differs by age according to Nancy Schretter, a Family & Multigenerational Travel Market Expert, as reported in the National Tour Association Study:[35]
    - Ages 1-4: Sense and Sensibility – storytelling, fantasy and wonder
    - Ages 3-5: DIY Years – interactive, education and variety
    - Ages 8-11: Identity Quest – variety, education and interactive
    - Ages 12-17: The Thrill Years – thrills, authenticity and history[36]
    - Young Adult Connections – experiences, adventure, authenticity, making a difference
- According to PGAV Destinations (2013), families represent one third of the U.S. population but make half of all visits to attractions. Priorities are: togetherness, fun, variety, unique experiences, learning something new, and going someplace new.

1.6. Groups

The group travel market has changed substantially in the past decade. No longer are tour operators booking large motor coaches of 55-60 people on a fast-paced itinerary. Group travel today is much more flexible, and often organized on a smaller scale or targeted itinerary for a theme. Collette's Explorations, launched a few years ago as a small group brand for 18 or fewer participants, saw growth in demand for small group tours is part of a larger trend favoring "niche tours" that allow consumers to "dive deeper" into a destination and to meet and mingle with people with similar interests.[37]

One of the most influential group travel planners for cultural heritage tourism is the educational travel segment. The annual Global Gathering of the Educational Travel Community, now in its 31st year, convenes two distinct groups involved in this market segment: nonprofit travel planners and special-interest tour operators.

- **Nonprofit Travel Planners**: Large and small travel programs are represented from alumni associations and continuing and international education departments; art, science, and natural history museums; cultural and preservation organizations; zoos, aquariums, and conservation groups; and from national and regional nonprofit organizations and affinity associations. Think Road Scholar, Stanford Alumni Association, California Alumni Association-Berkeley, The Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Geographic Society, and Oakland Museum of California.

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[32] Source: MMGY Portrait of American Travelers Survey
[33] Preferred Hotel Group, http://www.ntaonline.com/includes/media/docs/Family-Travel---NTA.pdf
[34] Preferred Hotel Group, http://www.ntaonline.com/includes/media/docs/Family-Travel---NTA.pdf
[35] Family & Multigenerational Travel Market, National Tour Association, http://www.ntaonline.com/includes/media/docs/Family-Travel---NTA.pdf
[36] PGAV Destinations – The Art of the Family Vacation Study
[37] Interview with Dan Sullivan IV, Director of Sales, in "Smaller is (Sometimes) Better: The Growth of Small Group Tours", http://www.travelmarketreport.com/articles/smaller-is-sometimes-better-the-growth-of-small-group-tours

- **Leading U.S. Tour Operators and Suppliers**… In addition to forging connections between travel planners from similar institutions, ETC brings together all the key and established special-interest group travel operators, destinations, and suppliers from all corners of the world. No other meeting assembles so many experts dedicated to serving this educational, alumni, and nonprofit travel market niche.110+ special-interest tour operators and 50+ specialty suppliers, from more than 40 international destinations, attend and exhibit during ETC. Companies and businesses represented include: Academic Arrangements Abroad, Distant Horizons, Odysseys Unlimited, Lindblad Expeditions, MIR, Nomadic Expeditions, Alaska Wildland Tours, Global Adrenaline, Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, USI Travel Insurance Services, Egyptair, Organization for Tropical Studies, Alumni Holidays, and TCS Expeditions.

2. Trends Impacting Cultural Heritage Tourism

Many consumer trends impact travel. You need only look at the global research innovator JWT Intelligence's annual list of trends[38] and you will see how the prediction of celebrity endorsements has become a reality, or how two predictions from 2014 resonate with travelers and influence tourism development today: the desire for "immersive experiences" and the impact of technology "as a gateway to opportunity" particularly through the use of visual images and mobile devices.

JWT Intelligence, publishers of *The Future 100: Trends and Changes to Watch in 2017,* recognizes the enrichment factor as a motivation for consumer's experiences. A trend emerging is the focus on social good, where consumers take part in volunteer work during their leisure time or vacation. "Tech naturalism" is the marriage of natural choices and pick-and-choose technology, especially related to health and wellness. Another trend is publishing Instagram stories, bite-sized articles with a strong visual lead to reach the medium's user base of 400 million.[39]

In 2015, JWT Intelligence noted several trends relevant for Bellingham/Whatcom County in its annual "Future 100" report:

- The desire for "experiential public spaces" multisensory experiences that augment nature
- Focus on wellness tourism – repackaged particularly for Millennials and Boomers, with a predicted growth of 55% by 2017
- Growth in "thought leadership getaways"
- Adventurist Impulse – championing outdoor pursuits
- Tech-Free Travel – taking time out from technology and offering space for contemplation.

In developing a strategic cultural heritage tourism plan, Bellingham and Whatcom County leaders are wise to track and monitor trends impacting consumer choices and travel. The following six trends provide "food for thought" for destination leaders to consider in setting goals, funding priorities,

[38] JWT Intelligence, https://www.jwtintelligence.com/trend-reports/
[39] "The Future 100: Trends and change to watch in 2017", JWT Intelligence https://www.jwtintelligence.com/trend-reports/the-future-100-2/

developing authentic activities, events and products, and delivering consistently high quality experiences.

Trend 1: Increased Competition

The number of active museums has doubled in the last 20 years (from 17,500 to 35,000+ in 2014).[40] The National Register of Historic Places has 90,540 listings, representing a total of 1.4 million individual contributing resources (including buildings, sites, structures, objects).[41] The United States also has designated 2,532 national historic landmarks, 20 World Heritage Sites, 49 national heritage areas, and more than 800 Preserve America communities. Add more than 2,000 Main Street communities across the country and the supply of cultural heritage "product" is high.

As mentioned on page 5, competition also comes in the form of other leisure time activities outside of travel, with multiple options now vying for a consumer's free time. Cultural heritage sites must provide dynamic and valued experiences worthy of a tourist's time and money.

Trend 2: Savvy Consumers

Consumers are better educated, more experienced travelers and therefore have higher expectations for tour experiences than even a decade ago. In 2014, JWT Intelligence named the "age of impatience" as one of the top 10 consumer trends, along with the desire for immersive experiences.[42] Places off the beaten path and destinations "new and near" are also gaining ground as consumers seek to step out of their normal environment and find little known discoveries (events, attractions, diners and destinations) within a day's drive.[43] Customization is key, and providing tailored experiences for each target market is essential to attract savvy customers – especially as Baby Boomers age and Millennials move into the power spot for travel.

Trend 3: Impact of Technology

More than one quarter of cultural heritage travelers report they visit websites via a QR (Quick Response) code using their smart phone. The cultural heritage tourist is three times more likely to use their mobile devices to learn about events and get recommendations, and more frequently book dining and attractions via mobile devices (smart phones and tablets) than general travelers. Social media has high usage by the cultural heritage tourist market, as well: 75% use Facebook and 40% use YouTube.[44] The

[40] Institute of Museum and Library Services, Government Doubles Official Estimate: There are 35,000 Active Museums in the U.S. (May 2014) https://www.imls.gov/news-events/news-releases/government-doubles-official-estimate-there-are-35000-active-museums-us
[41] National Register of Historic Places, http://www.nps.gov/nr/
[42] JWT Intelligence, The Future 100 – Trends and change to watch in 2015 (December 2014) https://www.jwtintelligence.com/trend-reports/the-future-100/
[43] Reid, Robert, 76-Second Travel Show, reidontravel.com (December 2014) for National Geographic Traveler
[44] Mandala Research, LLC, 2013 Cultural Heritage Traveler report

State of the American Traveler™ Technology Edition, published in April 2016 by Destination Analysts, highlights the importance of social and digital media in influencing travel decisions: 59.8 percent said the opinions of friends and relatives impacted their interest in visiting a place. While 90 percent of word-of-mouth still happens via personal conversation, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, etc.) accounts for 35.6 percent, and emails/texts/postcards/letters influence 29.4 percent of decisions regarding travel. What people of influence post, particularly friends and relatives, matters to potential travelers. Two-thirds of the respondents also hear about new technology via word-of-mouth.[45]

Perhaps the greatest technological advancement is the use of mobile devices for pre-planning research, purchases and on-site decision-making. From downloading apps to provide more detailed content about exhibits and tours, to finding restaurants and making reservations, smart phones help travelers locate desired information. Websites with responsive design are essential to become the portal for accessing information on any device – tablet, desktop, or phone.

The *State of the American Traveler Report*, produced by Destination Analysts,[46] cites some revealing statistics regarding travel media and technology. Despite growth in use of mobile devices, three quarters of travelers still prefer or strongly prefer planning on traditional devices – desktop or laptop – especially for researching activities, attractions or events. Slightly more than a quarter of travelers use APPs in travel planning. The technology issue (April 2016) identified profiles of technology adopters. Not unexpected, the innovators – the first to adopt new travel technologies – are Millennials and Gen-Xers. Innovators also travel the most and have the largest annual travel budgets. This ethnically diverse segment makes most or all the decisions regarding travel online.[47]

As technology advances rapidly into all facets of life, travel and destinations race to keep up with demand for quick access, personalization, mobile pay and other interconnected transactions to simplify and speed up logistics.[48] The explosive growth of Instagram, SnapChat, Flickr, Pinterest and other social media sites for image upload and sharing demonstrate how a picture is indeed worth a thousand words. Cultural heritage sites and destinations need to consider what images resonate with visitors – and how well they show on social media sites. Technology, and its impact on travel, is important to consider and integrate into all marketing and planning tools.

Trend 4: The Importance of Storytelling

Telling stories helps grab the tourist's attention with relevant content that connects them to the place. Engaging tourists in the conversation adds to the experience value, as dialogue helps build understanding and connection to place. Crowd-sourced content turns storytelling into story involvement – a conversation with the customer and community building. Trip Advisor, Yelp, Squidoo, Hubpages,

[45] "The State of the American Traveler"™ Technology Edition, Volume 20 (April 2016) produced by Destination Analytics, http://www.destinationanalysts.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/TheStateoftheAmericanTraveler-April2016.pdf
[46] Destination Analysts, Inc. (July 2015), The State of the American Traveler, Volume 18
[47] Destination Analysts, Inc. (April 2016), The State of the American Traveler, Volume 20, http://www.destinationanalysts.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/TheStateoftheAmericanTraveler-April2016.pdf
[48] Ericsson Consumer Lab, Orbitz Travel Trends for 2015 (December 2014)

blogs, and other online sites are now key trip planning tools for consumer recommendations, ratings and research.

Trend 5: Disruptive Business Models

The impact of the peer-to-peer movement or sharing economy has potentially favorable implications for the cultural heritage tourism segment. According to Vipin Goyal, now cofounder/partner of start-up studio called Shipyard NYC (previous founder, CEO of Side Tour, acquired by Groupon in September 2013)

> "this movement is driven by an interest in supporting local communities and artisans and knowing more about the people behind the things we buy. It's a shift away from mass-market efficiency … that has dominated the past couple of decades. Increasingly, people want to experience the unique gems (while traveling.)"[49]

The sharing economy – as evidenced by the success of Airbnb and Uber – demonstrate a shift in the delivery systems for highly personal experiences and exceptional customer service. While the sharing economy is testing traditional norms, especially related to payment of hotel/motel occupancy tax and driver registration/certification respectively, the sharing economy is increasingly engaged in the product development, distribution systems, and hosting services of the travel and tourism industry. Social media provides insights into desires and product development desired by new or emerging markets – particularly Millennials – to establish a new "Trust Economy" that satisfies a craving for authenticity and quality.

Trend 6: Desire for Immersive Experiences

An additional impact of the sharing economy is its great insight and opportunity for cultural heritage tourism development. Providing direct access for visitors to meet and interact with residents (experts, residents, guides, etc.) opens a dialogue for locally sourced content and experiences. The social interaction with locals, or engagement in favorite local activities, also achieves a growing desire of visitors (particularly cultural heritage tourists) to go beyond the superficial view of a destination that skims the surface with only tours to known attractions. Delving deeper into the character of a place allows visitors to consider life as a local, and learn more about the culture – past to present.

Two travel-related stresses negatively impacting the pleasure of a trip are 1) managing details, and 2) not feeling safe. The hassle of planning logistics can be stressful; so is the concern over safety and security. To counter these concerns, and cater to the desire for immersive experiences, tour operators are increasingly adding specific opportunities for exclusive, up-close-and-personal encounters with the people and cultures that define their destinations.

The American Express *LifeTwist Study*, conducted by the Futures Company in 2013, echoes this theme of immersion. According to the report, respondents defined their own success by embracing new experiences/challenges (65 percent) and always trying to learn and do new things (65 percent) –

[49] JWT Intelligence, Peer-Powered Travel Report, 2013

numbers 9 and 10 respectively of the Top 10 contributors to success. More importantly for cultural heritage tourism, the report said "72 percent would rather spend money on experiences than things."[50] The *LifeTwist Study* continued, "Americans have established a new standard of success where pursuing passions and seeking life fulfillment now supersede the sheer accumulation of wealth." Traveling, especially to new places, topped the bucket list for Americans (88 percent) polled in the study.[51]

Millennials, who comprise 32 percent of U.S. travelers, go beyond the desire for a casual meeting or local interaction in their definition of "immersive experiences." The interest in cultural heritage experiences for this generation, in particular, is high. Destination Analysts' July 2016 *Profile of Millennial Travelers in the United States* reports a comparable desire for authentic destination products, culture, and cuisine – similar to the baby boomer traveler.[52] According to MMGY Global, "nearly 60 percent of Millennials would rather spend money on experiences than on material goods." Dollar-wise, that translates to the average Millennial traveler planning to spend about $5,300 per trip.[53] Millennials like to stay connected while traveling, using technology not only for on-site trip planning but also for recording experiences and sharing with others via social media.

Conclusion

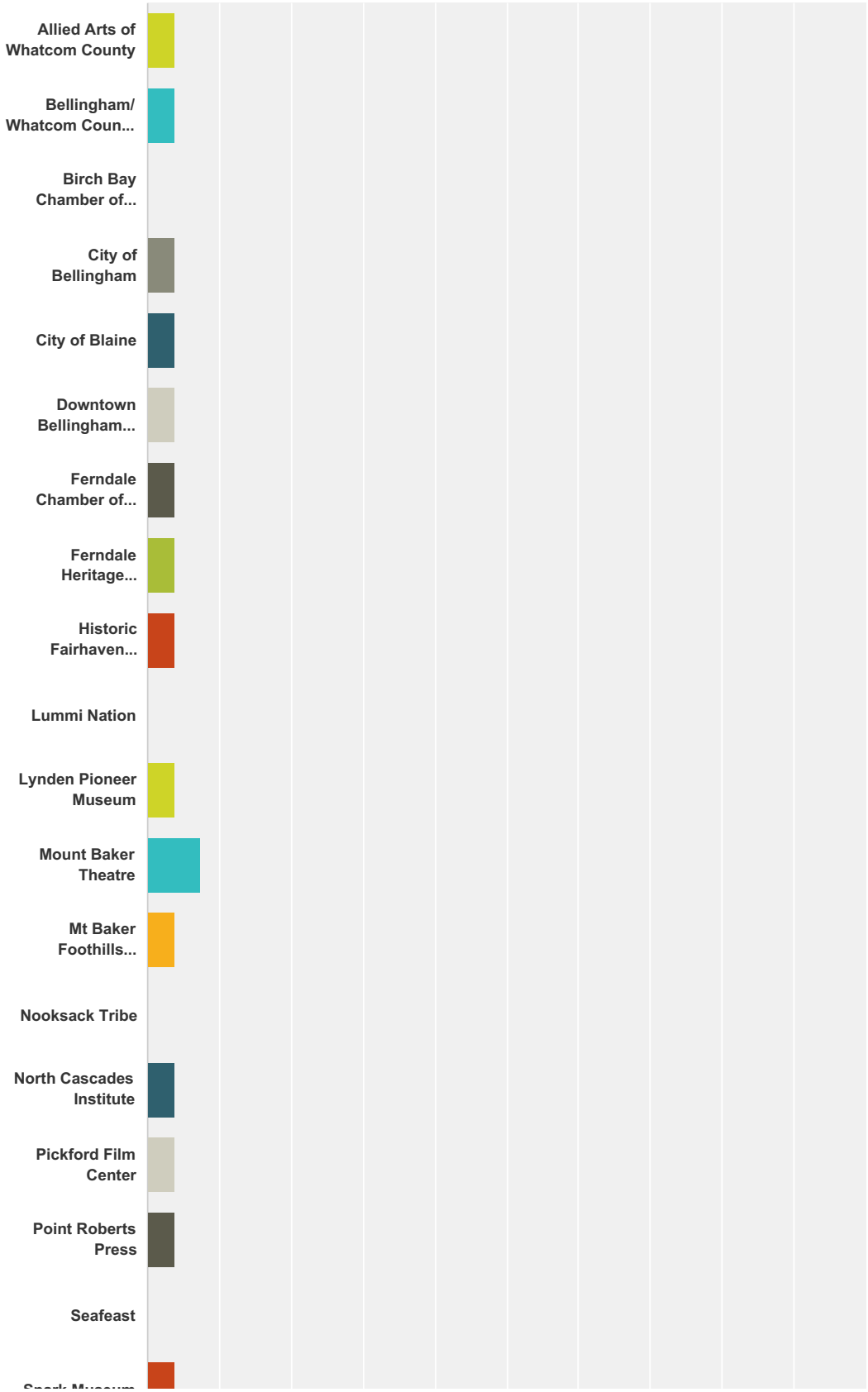
As the Bellingham/Whatcom County Cultural Heritage Tourism planning committee and advisory group begin to define desired outcomes for the destination, it is vital to understand trends impacting success and also the most appropriate audiences to market to/attract. Developing the right experiences, crafting resonating messages and marketing tools, preparing hosts to provide the necessary hospitality, and measuring the impact of cultural heritage tourism are important ingredients of a strategic and sustainable cultural heritage tourism. Focus and prioritization will ensure maximum return on investment.

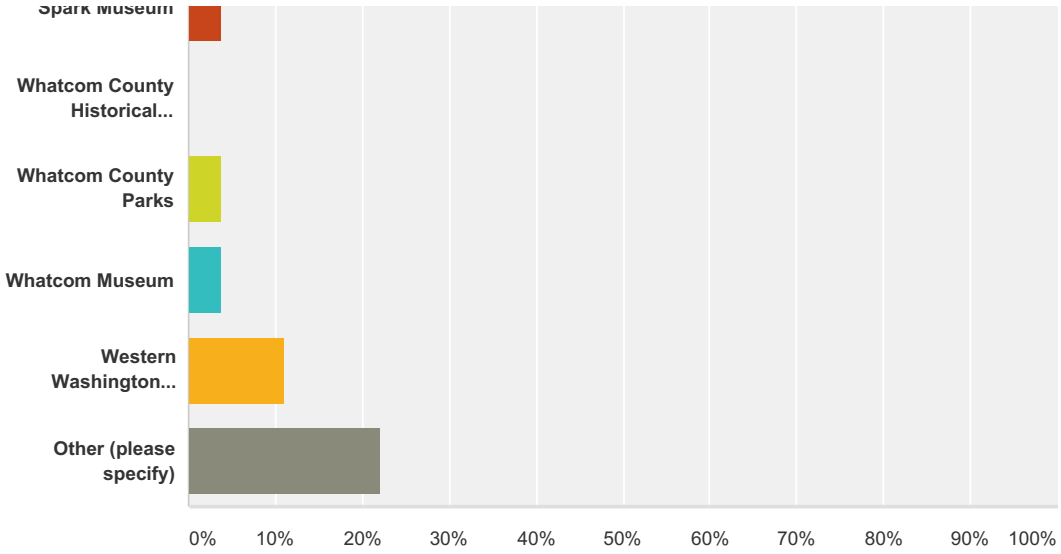
For additional information, contact: Cheryl Hargrove, 912-638-6078; 202-236-3777
E-mail: Cheryl @HTCPartners.com

[50] The Futures Company (2014) American Express LifeTwist Study, pp 7
[51] The Futures Company (2014) American Express LifeTwist Study, pp 12
[52] Destination Analysts (July 2015), Average Traveler Psychographic Intensity Index Score, Profile of Millennial travelers in the United States, http://www.statista.com/statistics/318096/profile-of-millennial-travelers-in-the-us/
[53] As reported by Roesler, P. (May 2015) "Mobile Technology and Future of Travel" Inc.com, http://www.inc.com/peter-roesler/mobile-technology-and-future-of-travel.html

Q1 What is the name of your organization, agency or business?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0





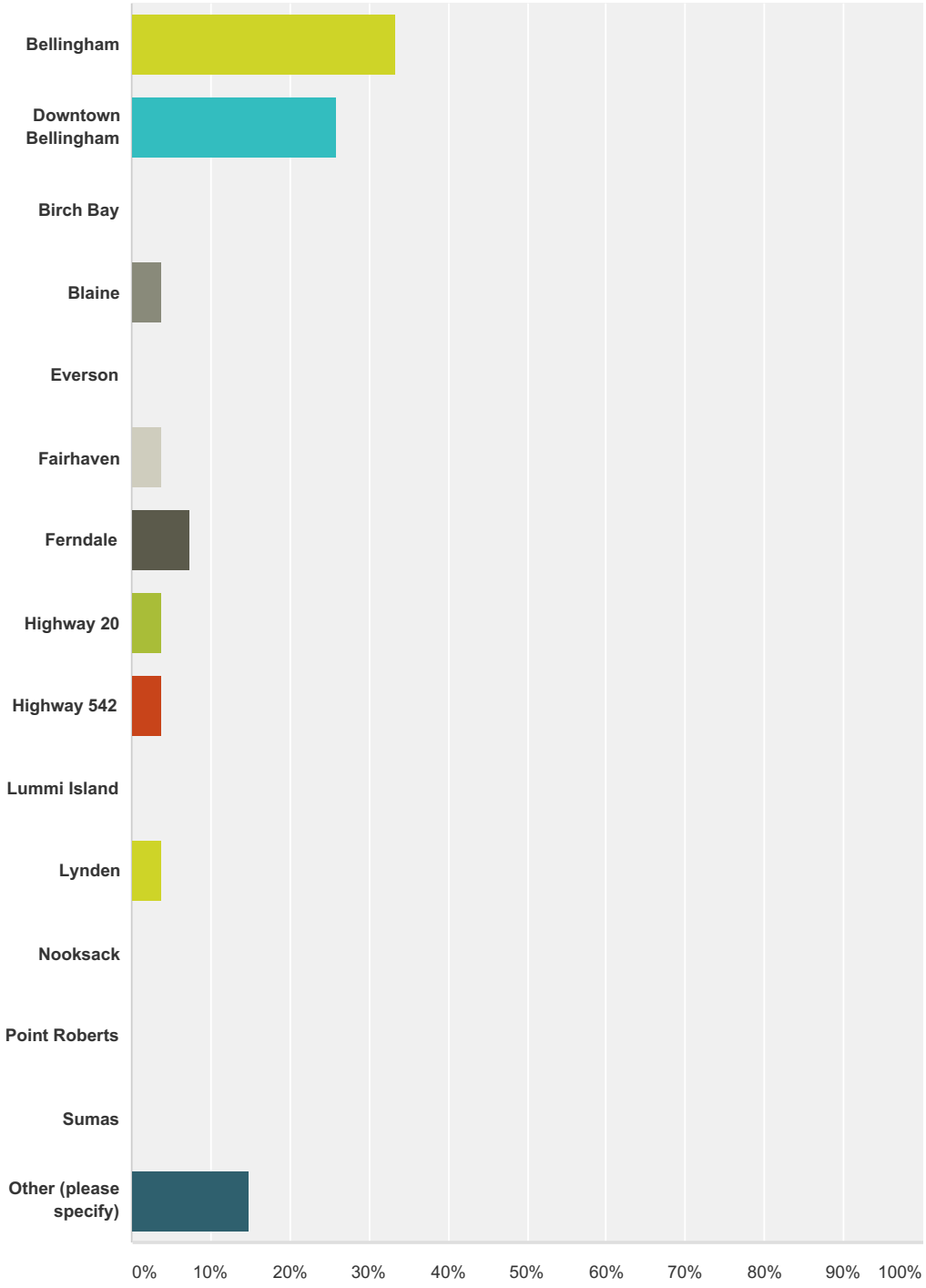
Answer Choices	Responses	
Allied Arts of Whatcom County	**3.70%**	1
Bellingham/ Whatcom County Tourism	**3.70%**	1
Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce	**0.00%**	0
City of Bellingham	**3.70%**	1
City of Blaine	**3.70%**	1
Downtown Bellingham Partnership	**3.70%**	1
Ferndale Chamber of Commerce	**3.70%**	1
Ferndale Heritage Society	**3.70%**	1
Historic Fairhaven Association	**3.70%**	1
Lummi Nation	**0.00%**	0
Lynden Pioneer Museum	**3.70%**	1
Mount Baker Theatre	**7.41%**	2
Mt Baker Foothills Chamber of Commerce	**3.70%**	1
Nooksack Tribe	**0.00%**	0
North Cascades Institute	**3.70%**	1
Pickford Film Center	**3.70%**	1
Point Roberts Press	**3.70%**	1
Seafeast	**0.00%**	0
Spark Museum	**3.70%**	1
Whatcom County Historical Society	**0.00%**	0
Whatcom County Parks	**3.70%**	1
Whatcom Museum	**3.70%**	1

Western Washington University	**11.11%**	3
Other (please specify)	**22.22%**	6
Total		**27**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Washington State Historical Society	4/20/2017 7:30 PM
2	Lummi Indian Business Council	4/20/2017 6:26 PM
3	Bellingham SeaFeast	4/18/2017 9:20 PM
4	Whatcom Maritime Association	4/18/2017 8:10 PM
5	TBD	4/18/2017 5:28 PM
6	Whatcom Maritime Association	4/12/2017 10:29 AM

Q2 Where is your organization or business located?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



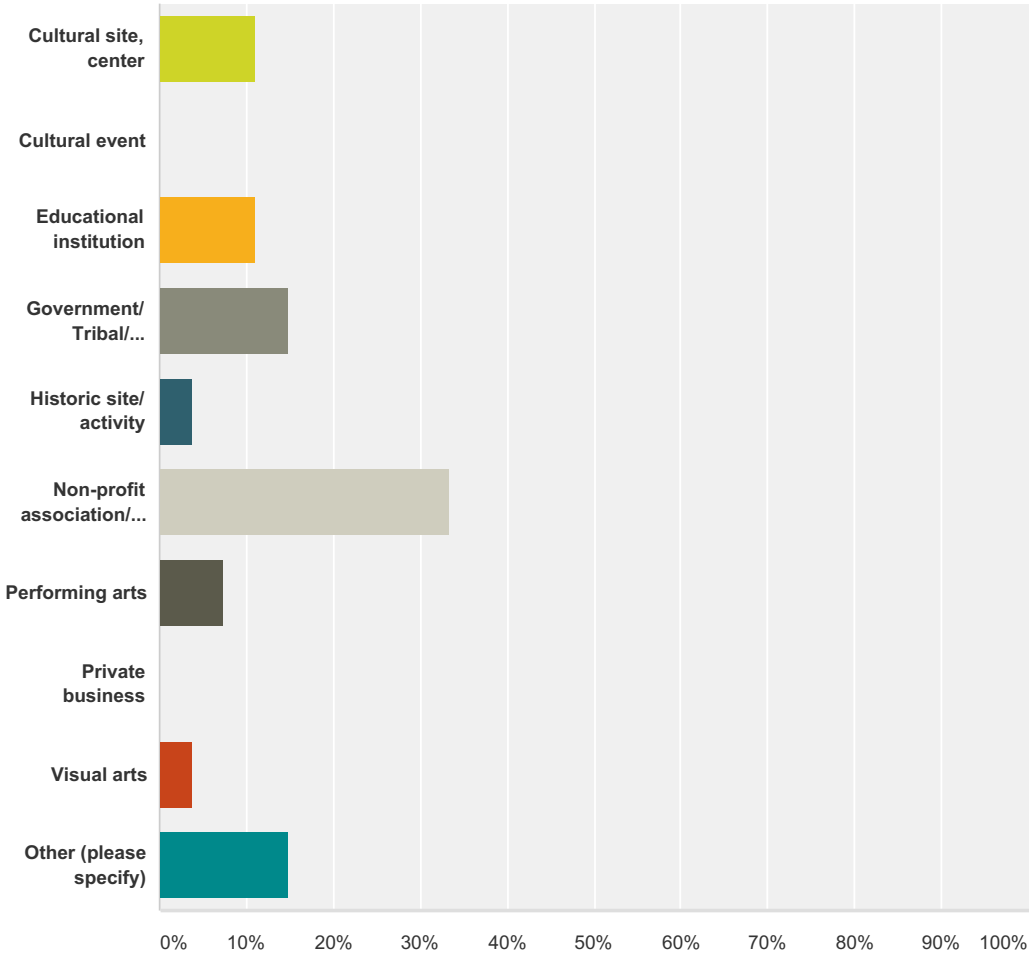
Answer Choices	Responses	
Bellingham	33.33%	9
Downtown Bellingham	25.93%	7

Birch Bay	**0.00%**	0
Blaine	**3.70%**	1
Everson	**0.00%**	0
Fairhaven	**3.70%**	1
Ferndale	**7.41%**	2
Highway 20	**3.70%**	1
Highway 542	**3.70%**	1
Lummi Island	**0.00%**	0
Lynden	**3.70%**	1
Nooksack	**0.00%**	0
Point Roberts	**0.00%**	0
Sumas	**0.00%**	0
Other (please specify)	**14.81%**	4
Total		**27**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Point Roberts, Blaine and Glacier	4/21/2017 6:54 PM
2	Tacoma	4/20/2017 7:30 PM
3	Lummi Indian Reservation, Bellingham	4/20/2017 6:26 PM
4	Western Whatcom County	4/18/2017 5:28 PM

Q3 What category best describes the entity you represent?

Answered: 27 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Cultural site, center	**11.11%**	3
Cultural event	**0.00%**	0
Educational institution	**11.11%**	3
Government/ Tribal/ Quasi-governmental agency	**14.81%**	4
Historic site/ activity	**3.70%**	1
Non-profit association/ organization	**33.33%**	9
Performing arts	**7.41%**	2
Private business	**0.00%**	0
Visual arts	**3.70%**	1
Other (please specify)	**14.81%**	4

Total	27

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Newspapers and tourist guides	4/21/2017 6:54 PM
2	Annual Waterfront Festival (non-profit)	4/18/2017 9:20 PM
3	Tours & events blended with visuals, story, landscape contact	4/18/2017 5:28 PM
4	Science & history museum	4/10/2017 6:27 PM

Q4 In order of significance to the county and visitor, please list what you consider the Top Five Cultural Heritage Attractions/Events/Activities in Bellingham/Whatcom County.

Answered: 25 Skipped: 2

Answer Choices	Responses	
1.	**100.00%**	25
2.	**100.00%**	25
3.	**100.00%**	25
4.	**100.00%**	25
5.	**100.00%**	25

#	1.	Date
1	Bellingham Seafest	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	Mt. Baker Theater	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	Fairhaven historic district	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Pioneer Park in Ferndale	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Northwest Washington Fair	4/20/2017 7:07 PM
6	Lummi Stommish Water Festival at Lummi Stommish Grounds	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
7	Ski to Sea	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Bellingham Farmer's Market	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
9	Ski to Sea / Mt. Baker in winter (other sporting events also important but considerably lesser in impact scale I would imagine)	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
10	Western Washinton University - College of Fine and Performing Arts performances, exhibits, events, Gallery installations, etc.	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
11	Museum	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
12	Whatcom Museum	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
13	Mount Baker Theatre	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
14	Not yet developed	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
15	Mt. Baker Theater	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
16	Whatcom Museum	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
17	The Outdoor Sculpture Collection, Western Washington University	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
18	Historic Fairhaven	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
19	Historical Pioneer Park log homes tour	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
20	Whatcom Museum	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
21	Stommish Festival	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
22	Interpretation in North Cascades National Park	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
23	Lynden Pioneer Museum	4/10/2017 5:02 PM

24	Whatcom Museum - all facilities	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
25	fairhaven historic village	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**2.**	**Date**
1	Farm Tour	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	Whatcom Museum	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	Whatcom Falls and the interurban trail corridors	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Picket House in Bellingham	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Downtown Fairhaven	4/20/2017 7:07 PM
6	Greek Festival at St Sophia's	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
7	Festival of Music	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Downtown Fairhaven	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
9	MBT--pulls significant travelers based on seeing show "at pristine historic theatre" (ie, they follow artist and could go anywhere). State of theatre reflects a past period in time of our town and the west coast. Also pulls travelers in for local productions in the same was as a kid's soccer game :).	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
10	Ski to Sea and coinciding events	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
11	Bellingham SeaFeast	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
12	Lummi Stomish	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
13	Whatcom Museum	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
14	Not yet developed	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
15	Village Books	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
16	Lummi Stomish	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
17	The Whatcom Museum of History and Art	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
18	Whatcom Museum	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
19	Lynden Pioneer Museum	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
20	Mt. Baker Theater	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
21	WWU Outdoor Sculpture Collection	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
22	Whatcom Museum	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
23	Northwest Washington Fair	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
24	Mount Baker Theatre	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
25	whatcom museum	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**3.**	**Date**
1	Mt Baker	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	Light Catcher Museum	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	Territorial Courthouse	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Lynden Museum in Lynden	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Hovander Homestead Park	4/20/2017 7:07 PM
6	Fiesta Patrias at Pioneer Park	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
7	Mt Baker Theater	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Downtown Lynden	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
9	Not necessarily organized but working as a current draw I think: Amount of breweries/beer & craft beverage and food availability (Tap Trail, etc).	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
10	Mt. Baker Theater	4/19/2017 9:14 AM

11	Lummi Stommish	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
12	Plover Ferry/ Alaska Packers Museum	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
13	WWU Sculpture Exibit	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
14	Not yet developed	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
15	Pickford Cinema	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
16	Lynden Museum	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
17	Mt. Baker Theater	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
18	Mount Baker Theatre	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
19	Pickett House Historical Landmark	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
20	Outdoor Sculpture Garden and Gallery WWU	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
21	Doctober	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
22	First Friday downtown art walk	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
23	Downtown Fairhaven	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
24	Peace Arch Park	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
25	good time girls historic tours	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**4.**	**Date**
1	Mt Baker Theatre	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	Judsen Art Center	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	historic waterfront	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Fairhaven in Bellingham	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Mt. Bake Theater	4/20/2017 7:07 PM
6	Pioneer Park	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
7	Fairhaven District	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Ski to Sea	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
9	Some combination of Downtown Partnership and Fairhaven Ass. messaging and offerings (all excellent), but I'm not seeing a standout destination or event from all offerings or combined messaging that is allowing people to plan based on multiple factors?	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
10	Allied Arts Festival(s) and events	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
11	NW Washington Fair	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
12	Mt. Baker Theater	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
13	Local art studios	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
14	Not yet developed	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
15	Whatcom Museum	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
16	Ski to Sea	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
17	Lummi culture (e.g. story pole by Court House)	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
18	Peace Arch State Park	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
19	Bellingham Sin & Gin Tour	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
20	Pickford Theater	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
21	Procession of the Species	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
22	Bellingham Farmers Market	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
23	Downtown Lynden	4/10/2017 5:02 PM

24	Ski to Sea	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
25	downtown activities - farmer's market, commercial street night market, wine walk, art walk	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**5.**	**Date**
1	Plover foot passenger ferry	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	International Peace Arch Park and Sculpture Exhibition	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	Whatcom Museum	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Peace Arch State Park in Blaine	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Whatcom Museum	4/20/2017 7:07 PM
6	SeaFeast at Squalicum Harbor	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
7	Beer Week	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Downtown Sounds	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
9	Farm map / berry picking, agricultural crafts /Farmer's market	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
10	Whatcom Museum(s) - Lightcatcher, Spark, etc.	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
11	Deming Logging Show	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
12	Ski to Sea Race	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
13	Sea Feast	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
14	Not yet developed	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
15	Peace Arch Sculpture Park	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
16	Mount Baker Theater	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
17	Bellingham Festival of Music	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
18	Lummi Nation	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
19	Lummi Stommish Festival	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
20	Spark Museum	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
21	Old City Hall	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
22	Bellingham craft breweries	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
23	Pioneer Park	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
24	Canoe Festival	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
25	mt. baker theatre	4/7/2017 10:49 AM

Q5 As a cultural heritage tourism destination, what do you consider Bellingham/Whatcom County's greatest:

Answered: 24 Skipped: 3

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strength:	**100.00%**	24
Weakness:	**95.83%**	23
Opportunity:	**87.50%**	21
Threat:	**87.50%**	21

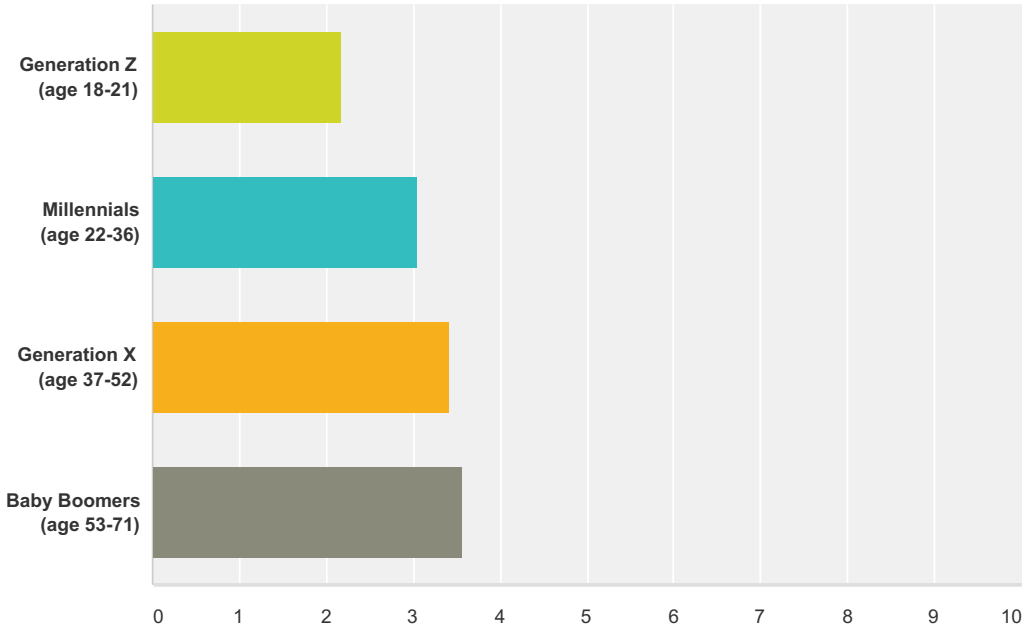
#	Strength:	Date
1	water and mountains	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	The number of cultural heritage destinations that are here	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	access to nature and cultural experiences	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Many things to see and do.	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Water recreation	4/20/2017 6:33 PM
6	Variety of attractions	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
7	Wealth of recreational experiences	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
8	Geography, both location proximate to bigger cities and amazing geographic features--also size of town is very accessible.	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
9	Sheer number and variety of events year-round	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
10	Maritime and waterfront and fishing heritage, including native American	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
11	Trail Systems	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
12	Mount Baker Theatre (historic venue, diverse programming)	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
13	vestiges of turn of century, ecological diversity, proximity to airports, potential Salish participation	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
14	Diversity of cultural organizations & events	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
15	Excellent trail systems	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
16	Its location between Seattle and Vacouver	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
17	Community involvement	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
18	We have done a great job trying to preserve the past	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
19	Location	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
20	Location	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
21	focus on outdoor activities, nature interpretation, recreation, scenic beauty	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
22	Diversity and amount of experiences available	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
23	Variety	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
24	trail and park system - can walk to many destinations	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**Weakness:**	**Date**
1	communication	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	The lack of networking between Whatcom County Communities	4/21/2017 6:51 PM

3	railroad noise, coal dust	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Publicity	4/20/2017 7:20 PM
5	Lack of cohesive thematic connection	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
6	Lack of significant Native American cultural destinations	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
7	Lacking external unified "personality" by season (it has been changing really fast, too :))	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
8	PR, accessibility for all (socio-economic, transportation, etc)	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
9	This maritime heritage is undervalued and unknown to residents and visitors	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
10	Linking historic sites to current environment	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
11	lack of coordinated efforts	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
12	punctuated trail system, reasonable accommodations away from freeway, uninformed cultural sensitivity masking appropriation	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
13	Cultural organizations do not work together enough to promote culture/arts/events	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
14	Linking historic sites to current environment	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
15	Not a concentrated resource	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
16	Limited open hours	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
17	We are not old compared to the East Coast	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
18	Marketing/Identity	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
19	Lack of leadership or organization for the cultural heritage community	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
20	lack of access or activities on Bellingham waterfront	4/10/2017 5:28 PM
21	Lack of cross promotion/organized promotion	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
22	attractions are spread out	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
23	wayfinding to and between destinations within bellingham & the county	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**Opportunity:**	**Date**
1	to actually use the waterfront and mountains for events	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	To create the cultural heritage story of our communities	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	interpretive signage and tours	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Maritime presence	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
5	Bellingham Waterfront	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
6	Creating seasonal cross-functional offerings that build a story (culture + adventure), treating the city more as a "hub" (capturing airport pass-through folks for overnight packages, cruise passengers in summer for add-on days with combined offerings, etc)	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
7	We need need more Native/Igidigous cultural attention and events	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
8	Celebrate and showcase this maritime heritage starting with Native American history and carrying through to present	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
9	Industrial tourism	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
10	Build on festival concept	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
11	Yes	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
12	Showcase the variety of things to see & do	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
13	Industrial tourism	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
14	Its location between Seattle and Vacouver	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
15	collaborative partnerships	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
16	If you come for one thing, you have the advantage of all of it	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
17	Create more aligned attractions eg. become a food or beer destination	4/10/2017 7:08 PM

18	Affluent, well educated, travelers on Interstate 5 itchy to get out of Vancouver and Seattle	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
19	Low crime, low traffic, clean and as diverse as Seattle area	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
20	improve signage	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
21	enhance coordination between agencies, organizations & activities, and have mentorships occur between groups	4/7/2017 10:49 AM
#	**Threat:**	**Date**
1	lack of funding to promote and protect events	4/21/2017 7:16 PM
2	lack of funding	4/21/2017 6:51 PM
3	demolition of historic structures and neighborhoods	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
4	Other cities that are attractive alternatives	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
5	Lack of movement on the waterfront, homeless, crime, drug use	4/20/2017 4:33 PM
6	Increased border issues / exchange rate issues taking Canadian market	4/19/2017 12:52 PM
7	Perception of non-inclusive community; incorrect/incomplete historical information (lacking diverse perspectives/histories/stories)	4/19/2017 9:14 AM
8	Not enough resources will be put forward to realize this opportunity	4/18/2017 9:28 PM
9	disregard of history vs development	4/18/2017 8:15 PM
10	lack of funding and leadership	4/18/2017 6:53 PM
11	Inertia	4/18/2017 5:35 PM
12	Online entertainment and weather	4/12/2017 12:05 PM
13	disregard of history vs development	4/12/2017 10:30 AM
14	Less than exceptional art promoted	4/11/2017 1:21 PM
15	financial crisis	4/11/2017 9:19 AM
16	Lack of interest from upcoming generations in preserving the past	4/10/2017 7:39 PM
17	Lack of local interest	4/10/2017 7:08 PM
18	Lack of ambition	4/10/2017 5:31 PM
19	Local businesses and inhabitants not understanding the value of heritage tourism	4/10/2017 5:02 PM
20	not having enticements to get off I-5	4/10/2017 4:57 PM
21	competition between organizations - breakdown of communication and collaboration. and homelessness downtown.	4/7/2017 10:49 AM

Q6 Please rank, in order of preference, the importance of these demographic audiences to your organization and/or site in the next three years

Answered: 25 Skipped: 2

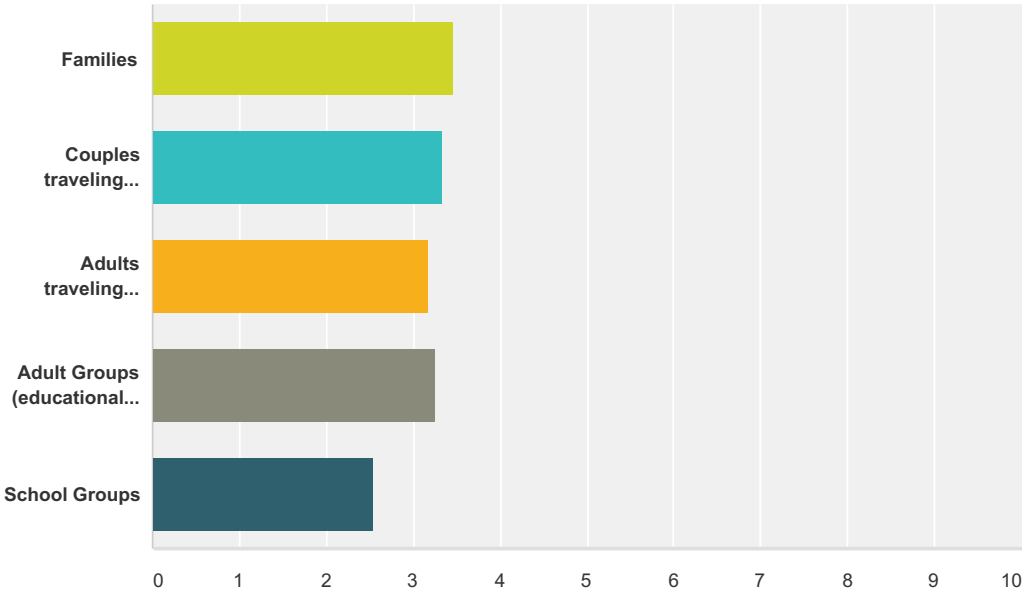


	Least Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Most Important	Total	Weighted Average
Generation Z (age 18-21)	**33.33%** 8	**33.33%** 8	**16.67%** 4	**16.67%** 4	24	2.17
Millennials (age 22-36)	**0.00%** 0	**36.00%** 9	**24.00%** 6	**40.00%** 10	25	3.04
Generation X (age 37-52)	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**58.33%** 14	**41.67%** 10	24	3.42
Baby Boomers (age 53-71)	**4.17%** 1	**4.17%** 1	**20.83%** 5	**70.83%** 17	24	3.58

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	All are important to Wa State History Museum	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
2	All of these are relevant and important to our site	4/11/2017 1:26 PM
3	Audience with opportunity more than age. Travelers looking for things to do on their way somewhere else need an easy way to see cultural history	4/10/2017 7:44 PM
4	Educational opportunities with school districts ages 5-17	4/10/2017 5:04 PM
5	I work for the City of Bellingham - we want older folks and families to feel comfortable spending time downtown	4/7/2017 10:51 AM

Q7 Please rank, in order of preference, the importance of these audience profiles to your organization and/or site in the next three years

Answered: 25 Skipped: 2

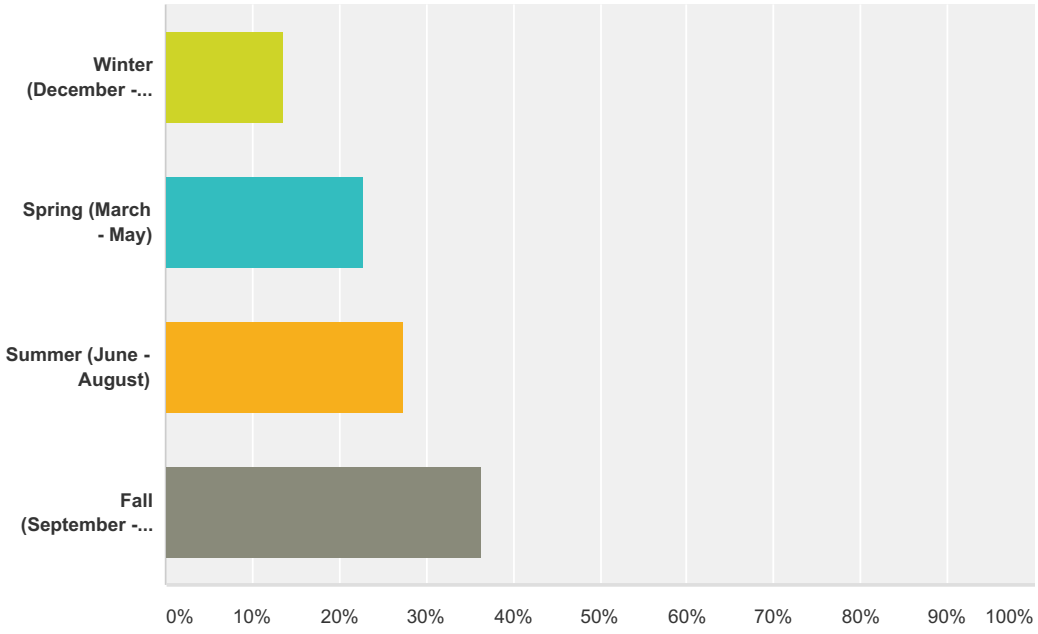


	Least important	Somewhat important	Important	Most important	Total	Weighted Average
Families	**0.00%** 0	**8.33%** 2	**37.50%** 9	**54.17%** 13	24	3.46
Couples traveling without children	**4.17%** 1	**4.17%** 1	**45.83%** 11	**45.83%** 11	24	3.33
Adults traveling independently	**0.00%** 0	**13.64%** 3	**54.55%** 12	**31.82%** 7	22	3.18
Adult Groups (educational or special interest, group tours, niche audiences)	**4.17%** 1	**12.50%** 3	**37.50%** 9	**45.83%** 11	24	3.25
School Groups	**20.83%** 5	**25.00%** 6	**33.33%** 8	**20.83%** 5	24	2.54

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	All are important to Wa State History Museum	4/20/2017 7:44 PM
2	We serve all these groups, sorry for lack of ranking :)	4/19/2017 12:56 PM
3	All of these are relevant and important to our site	4/11/2017 1:26 PM
4	my answers are directed mainly at downtown bellingham	4/7/2017 10:51 AM

Q8 What time of year is most important to attract cultural heritage tourists to your organization or business in the next three years?

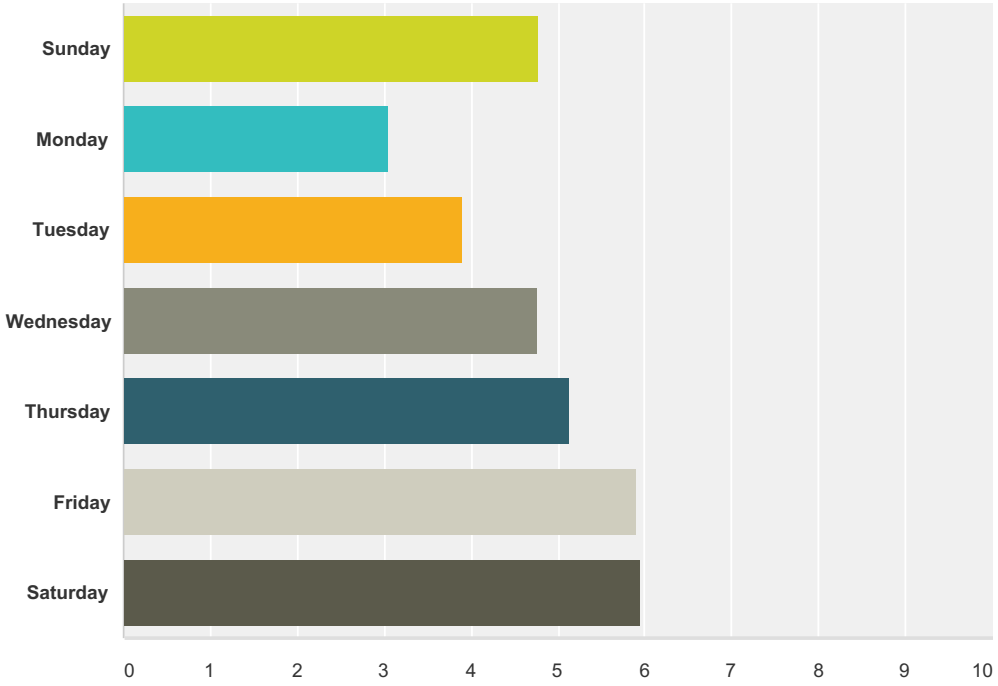
Answered: 22 Skipped: 5



Answer Choices	Responses	
Winter (December - February)	13.64%	3
Spring (March - May)	22.73%	5
Summer (June - August)	27.27%	6
Fall (September - November)	36.36%	8
Total		**22**

Q9 On a scale of 1-7, with 7 as most important, please rank the days of the week are you most interested in hosting more cultural heritage visitors to your organization or business in the next three years.

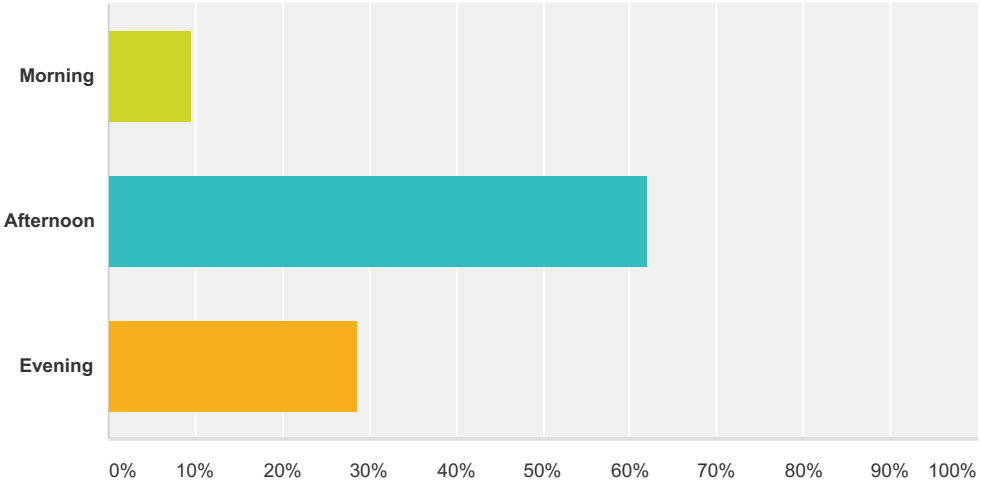
Answered: 23 Skipped: 4



	Least important - 1	2	3	Important - 4	5	6	Most important - 7	Total	Weighted Average
Sunday	**21.74%** 5	**0.00%** 0	**8.70%** 2	**4.35%** 1	**8.70%** 2	**26.09%** 6	**30.43%** 7	23	4.78
Monday	**31.58%** 6	**21.05%** 4	**10.53%** 2	**15.79%** 3	**0.00%** 0	**10.53%** 2	**10.53%** 2	19	3.05
Tuesday	**4.76%** 1	**23.81%** 5	**19.05%** 4	**23.81%** 5	**0.00%** 0	**14.29%** 3	**14.29%** 3	21	3.90
Wednesday	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**23.81%** 5	**23.81%** 5	**19.05%** 4	**19.05%** 4	**14.29%** 3	21	4.76
Thursday	**0.00%** 0	**4.76%** 1	**4.76%** 1	**33.33%** 7	**9.52%** 2	**23.81%** 5	**23.81%** 5	21	5.14
Friday	**4.55%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**4.55%** 1	**4.55%** 1	**9.09%** 2	**31.82%** 7	**45.45%** 10	22	5.91
Saturday	**8.70%** 2	**0.00%** 0	**4.35%** 1	**4.35%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**21.74%** 5	**60.87%** 14	23	5.96

Q10 What time of day are visitors most desired?

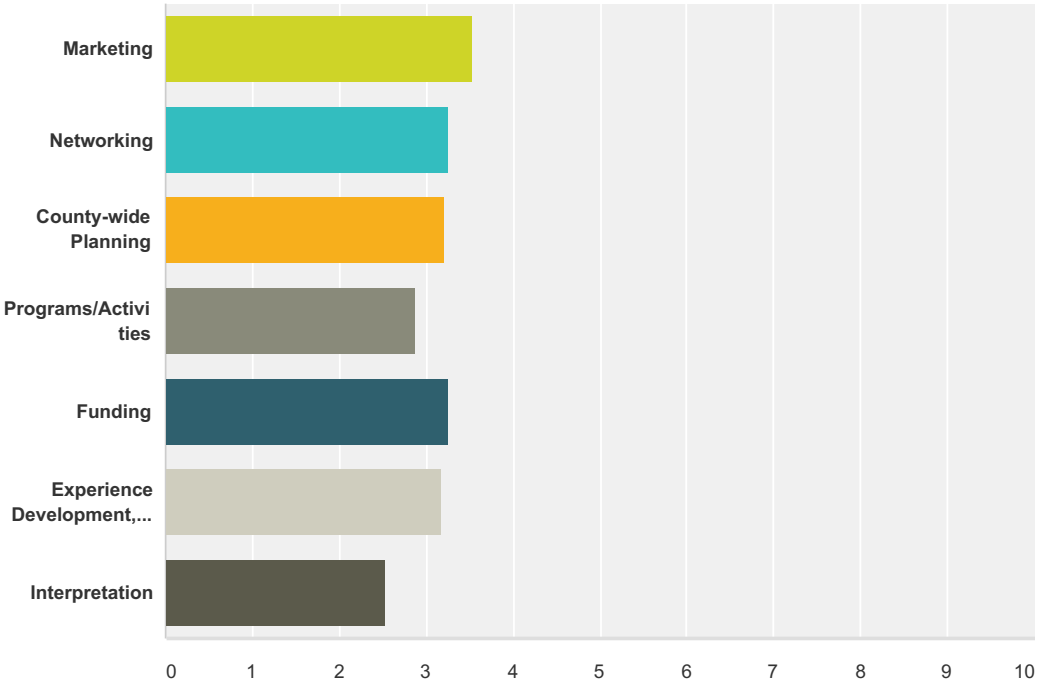
Answered: 21 Skipped: 6



Answer Choices	Responses	
Morning	**9.52%**	2
Afternoon	**61.90%**	13
Evening	**28.57%**	6
Total		**21**

Q11 What types of partnerships would you like to see result from this plan?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 2



	Least important	Somewhat important	Important	Most important	Total	Weighted Average
Marketing	**0.00%** 0	**4.00%** 1	**40.00%** 10	**56.00%** 14	25	3.52
Networking	**0.00%** 0	**16.67%** 4	**41.67%** 10	**41.67%** 10	24	3.25
County-wide Planning	**4.35%** 1	**13.04%** 3	**39.13%** 9	**43.48%** 10	23	3.22
Programs/Activities	**0.00%** 0	**29.17%** 7	**54.17%** 13	**16.67%** 4	24	2.88
Funding	**4.17%** 1	**12.50%** 3	**37.50%** 9	**45.83%** 11	24	3.25
Experience Development, Enhancement	**4.35%** 1	**13.04%** 3	**43.48%** 10	**39.13%** 9	23	3.17
Interpretation	**17.39%** 4	**26.09%** 6	**43.48%** 10	**13.04%** 3	23	2.52

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	publication/website highlighting cultural tourism options	4/10/2017 5:33 PM
2	i'd like to see some of these partnerships simultaneously enhance the above options	4/7/2017 11:09 AM

Q12 Name one activity/project that should be accomplished in the short term (6-12 months) to help grow Bellingham/ Whatcom County as a Cultural Heritage Tourism Destination.

Answered: 21 Skipped: 6

#	Responses	Date
1	Inventory and Map of Cultural Heritage Sights in Whatcom County	4/21/2017 6:52 PM
2	design and installation of interpretive signage especially at parks and along trails	4/20/2017 7:51 PM
3	More advertising!	4/20/2017 7:29 PM
4	?	4/20/2017 7:18 PM
5	Promotion of our Lummi Stommish Water Festival	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
6	Connecting cultural heritage tourism destinations through a thematic identity	4/20/2017 4:45 PM
7	Creating a message and accompanying brand + plan for getting word out about how great a place this is.	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	some combined offers and messaging with shared narrative	4/19/2017 1:07 PM
9	A very clear marketing/PR plan that addresses inclusivity	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
10	Involve Lummi and Nooksack nations in Bellingham SeaFeast	4/18/2017 9:31 PM
11	Parks on the Waterfront that provide public access to the shoreline	4/18/2017 8:25 PM
12	organization with clear leadership to focus on this issue	4/18/2017 7:03 PM
13	Solicit group of CT/WL providers	4/18/2017 5:53 PM
14	Marketing collaboration among organizations to promote a cohesive cultural district or theme	4/12/2017 1:18 PM
15	Define what that looks like and what it includes and why.	4/10/2017 7:53 PM
16	Identity Branding	4/10/2017 7:19 PM
17	Arts district community-wide, downtown, holiday event	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
18	website?	4/10/2017 5:33 PM
19	Promotion of the ENTIRE county and all it has to offer.	4/10/2017 5:06 PM
20	Improved signage	4/10/2017 5:03 PM
21	wayfinding planning within bellingham, and between county-wide destinations	4/7/2017 11:09 AM

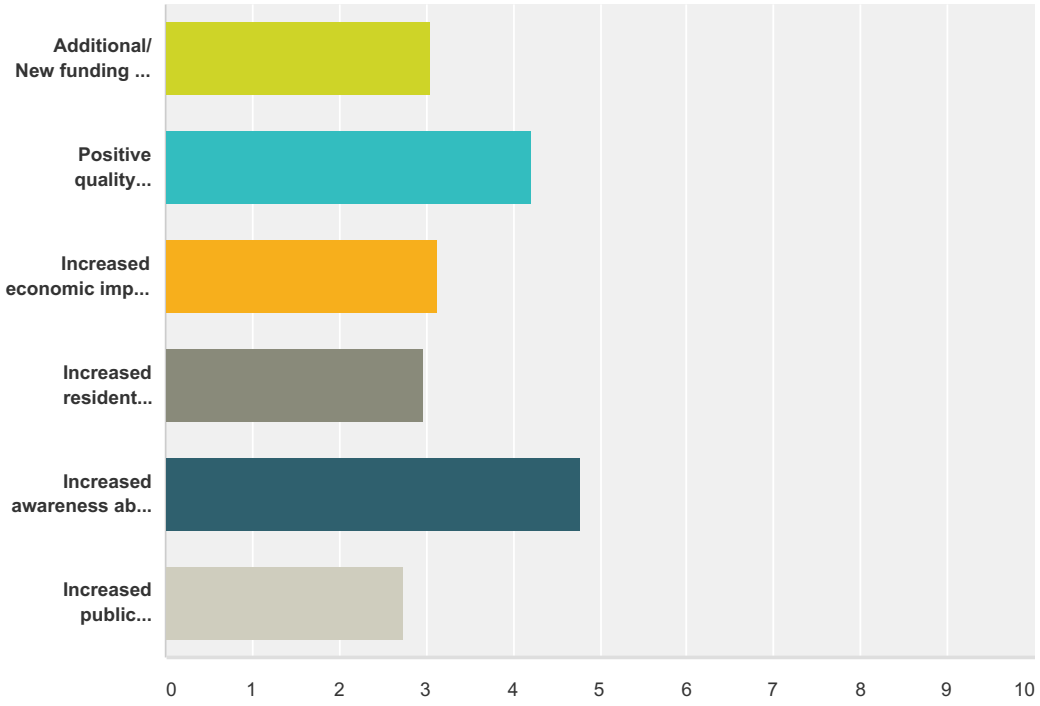
Q13 Looking ahead five years, please name a long range project to improve or expand Bellingham/ Whatcom County's Cultural Heritage Tourism.

Answered: 21 Skipped: 6

#	Responses	Date
1	Interpretive and Wayfinding Signage Plan	4/21/2017 6:52 PM
2	comprehensive web information	4/20/2017 7:51 PM
3	A walking/biking trail that would connect the communities	4/20/2017 7:29 PM
4	Create a network of coordinated cultural attractions with the service industry (travel packages, website, vlog, etc.	4/20/2017 7:18 PM
5	Events at Silver Reef Casino	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
6	Create a destination cultural heritage tourism site on the waterfront	4/20/2017 4:45 PM
7	Interactive map/app of the entire county with cultural heritage sites, where to stay and eat close to them, etc.	4/20/2017 4:39 PM
8	Ways to integrate native american cultural experiences into our mainstream tourism offerings so we have a voice/brand and ideally capture more travel based on the town as a must-see experience for pass-through/gateway travelers.	4/19/2017 1:07 PM
9	Great Access for ALL - parking, transportation, costs, diversity	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
10	Waterfront Development project with a cultural center on premises	4/18/2017 9:31 PM
11	Interpretive displays one the waterfront	4/18/2017 8:25 PM
12	create festival with events and connections to CHT	4/18/2017 7:03 PM
13	Dodging question with concern: disassociating CULTURAL tourism from ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCE tourism won;t work. Culture mut be presented in/with experience of landscape, wild, tamed and changing due to global forces. CT cannot stand on it's own without becoming phoney and disengaging tradition from the future. Stories work better with place, strong places.	4/18/2017 5:53 PM
14	Create improved & cohesive way-finding for arts and culture districts in city and county	4/12/2017 1:18 PM
15	Pioneer Park (Village) needs to be completely boosted with funds to extend the months it's open, more of a "Williamsburg" feel with activities going on that people can join in that are from the era. Making hand strewn logs for example. How the houses were made.	4/10/2017 7:53 PM
16	Cultural Core with supporting businesses providing additional draw opportunities. Galleries, restaurants, shops	4/10/2017 7:19 PM
17	Organization into an effective community that serves to keep the arts front and center with government(s) and the public.	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
18	waterfront development, developing interpretation materials like guided downtown history walk maps or interpretive podcasts	4/10/2017 5:33 PM
19	Alcan Highway history (we are a jumping off point for that route)	4/10/2017 5:06 PM
20	more marketing tools	4/10/2017 5:03 PM
21	more tours, experiential & educational activities. and strengthened partnerships between smaller groups (like the Pickett House, Whatcom County Historical Society' Territorial Courthouse, the Ferndale Heritage Society (Pioneer Park) and the Lynden Pioneer Museum	4/7/2017 11:09 AM

Q14 Please rank, in order of priority, how the success of the Cultural Heritage Tourism plan and its implementation should be measured.

Answered: 24 Skipped: 3



	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Score
Additional/ New funding for cultural heritage tourism	**13.64%** 3	**9.09%** 2	**9.09%** 2	**27.27%** 6	**18.18%** 4	**22.73%** 5	22	3.05
Positive quality cultural heritage visitor experiences	**30.43%** 7	**17.39%** 4	**17.39%** 4	**17.39%** 4	**13.04%** 3	**4.35%** 1	23	4.22
Increased economic impact from cultural heritage tourism	**4.55%** 1	**18.18%** 4	**22.73%** 5	**13.64%** 3	**22.73%** 5	**18.18%** 4	22	3.14
Increased resident engagement in cultural heritage tourism activities, events, programs	**4.35%** 1	**8.70%** 2	**21.74%** 5	**21.74%** 5	**30.43%** 7	**13.04%** 3	23	2.96
Increased awareness about Bellingham/Whatcom County as a cultural heritage destination	**39.13%** 9	**30.43%** 7	**17.39%** 4	**0.00%** 0	**8.70%** 2	**4.35%** 1	23	4.78
Increased public recognition for the value of cultural heritage tourism	**8.70%** 2	**13.04%** 3	**8.70%** 2	**21.74%** 5	**8.70%** 2	**39.13%** 9	23	2.74

Q15 Please provide any additional comments or suggestions to help inform the Cultural Heritage Tourism Plan and the setting of goals, objectives and desired outcomes.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 17

#	Responses	Date
1	strengthen awareness and appreciation of our local diversity	4/20/2017 7:51 PM
2	I suggest you meet with the Cultural Committee, Natural Resources Commission, and Economic Development Commission to discuss events advertised on behalf of the Lummi Nation.	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
3	Not being stingy, I just think there can be a lot of synergies explored that don't require additional funding up front?	4/19/2017 1:07 PM
4	It would be wonderful to see a more balanced attention to our fascinating history and the cultural events and sites that could arise from that attention, meaning truly engaging and inviting the indigenous and immigrant history not as shadow, separate aspects of our culture and history, but as an integral part of how our community came to be and currently exists. I also see the above rankings of measured success as so dependent upon each other that a couple of them cannot be achieved singularly (such as "increased resident engagement" and "Increased public recognition for value..."). Important and necessary elements such as increased funding and quality experiences cannot be achieved without first accomplishing value recognition and broader engagement!	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
5	Forget calling it a 'plan'. This is death knell to something that is fundamentally a mix of free enterprise services that can and must compete in a marketplace. Effort should be about IDing basic gaps/deficiencies in accommodation, transportation, marketing that are faced by a defined array potential providers.	4/18/2017 5:53 PM
6	Just be sure to keep the momentum and keep everyone informed as you go along. Let us know what you need and let us know of any progress we might not otherwise be aware of that keeps the ideas forefront and keeps us talking and helping where we can.	4/10/2017 7:53 PM
7	Difficult to range these. Increased resident engagement will result in increased awareness and recognition of the value of cultural heritage. Evidence of economic and social impact will improve funding opportunities. However,the city/county must provide some start up funds.	4/10/2017 7:19 PM
8	All organizations are now operating without any mechanism to work together. Greater strength and effectiveness would come through banding together and operating as a trade group.	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
9	Thank you for doing this!!!	4/10/2017 5:03 PM
10	i'd like to see partnerships between similar and complimentary groups form and grow as a result of the plan. for example, to see the Historic Fairhaven Association and Downtown Bellingham Partnership interact and learn from each other; to have the historical societies of Whatcom County build alliances to help care for and program their buildings and collections; to promote and educate the public and visitors on the array of maker art & performance classes and experiences available; and to improve access to WWU educational and experiential opportunities for visitors.	4/7/2017 11:09 AM

Q16 Please list the names (plus affiliation, and email addresses or phone numbers, if available) of any individuals we should send this survey to for completion.

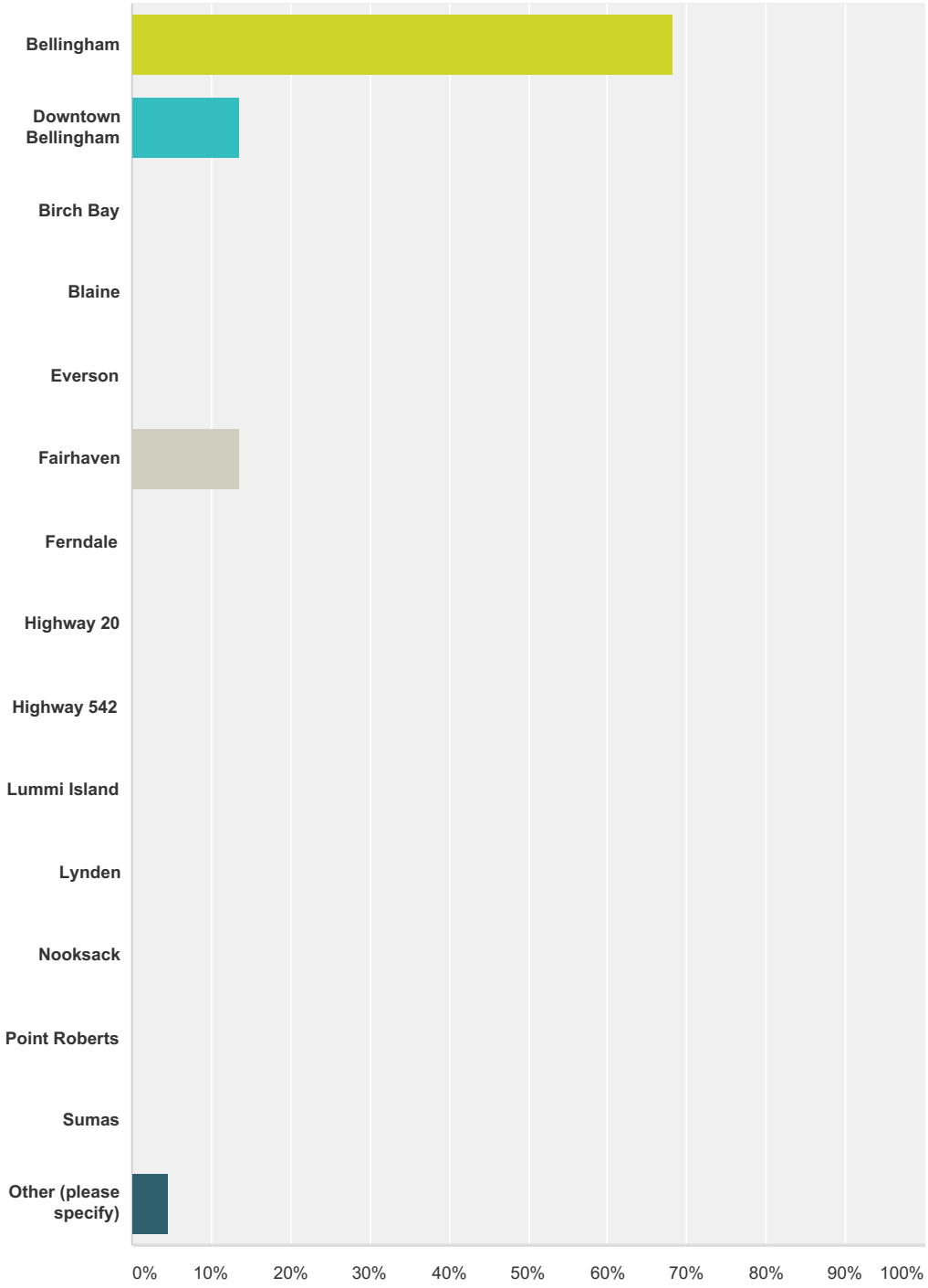
Answered: 9 Skipped: 18

Answer Choices	Responses	
Name/contact info:	**100.00%**	9
Name/contact info:	**77.78%**	7
Name/contact info:	**66.67%**	6

#	Name/contact info:	Date
1	Michael Jones/mjones@cityofblaine.com	4/21/2017 6:52 PM
2	Linda Harkleroad LWHark@comcast.net Ferndale Heritage Society	4/20/2017 7:29 PM
3	Rita Jefferson/RitaJ@lummi-nsn.gov	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
4	Robert Muzzy - muznshell@msn.com (long time B'ham resident and arts/culture supporter)	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
5	Patricia Leach, Executive Directory, Whatcom Museum, pleach@cob.org	4/12/2017 1:18 PM
6	Julie Aamot, Ferndale Heritage Society, civilwargal@live.com	4/11/2017 9:24 AM
7	Hafthor Yngvason, Director WWU Gallery, Hafthor.Yngvason@wwu.edu	4/10/2017 7:19 PM
8	Lindsey Gerhard, Pickford Film Center, lindsey@pickfordfilmcenter.org	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
9	Mike Hogan, Port of Bellingham MikeH@portofbellingham.com	4/7/2017 11:09 AM
#	**Name/contact info:**	**Date**
1	Dave Wilbrecht/dwilbrecht@cityofblaine.com	4/21/2017 6:52 PM
2	Serena Leibrant For4Ss@aol.com Ferndale Heritage Society	4/20/2017 7:29 PM
3	Cynthia Wilson/CynthiaW@lummi-nsn.gov	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
4	Alison Terry Storms - alison.storms@mtbakertheatre.com (Mt. Baker Theatre Education/Outreach)	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
5	Kit Spicer, Dean, College of Fine and Performing Arts, WWU Kit.Spicer@wwu.edu	4/10/2017 7:19 PM
6	Barbara Matilsky, Whatcom Museum, bcmatilsky@cob.org	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
7	Rene Sherer socialfabricbham@gmail.com	4/7/2017 11:09 AM
#	**Name/contact info:**	**Date**
1	Christopher Hutsen/chutsen@semiahmoo.com	4/21/2017 6:52 PM
2	Bonnie Wiesen unzwiesen@nwshippers.com Ferndale Heritage Society	4/20/2017 7:29 PM
3	Laura Williams/LauraW@lummicdfi.org	4/20/2017 7:14 PM
4	Darrell Hillaire - Lummi Nation	4/19/2017 9:36 AM
5	Sheila Klein, Artist, sheklein@fidalgo.net	4/10/2017 5:53 PM
6	Marissa McGrath marissa@downtownbellingham.com	4/7/2017 11:09 AM

Q1 Where is your hotel or lodging property located?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



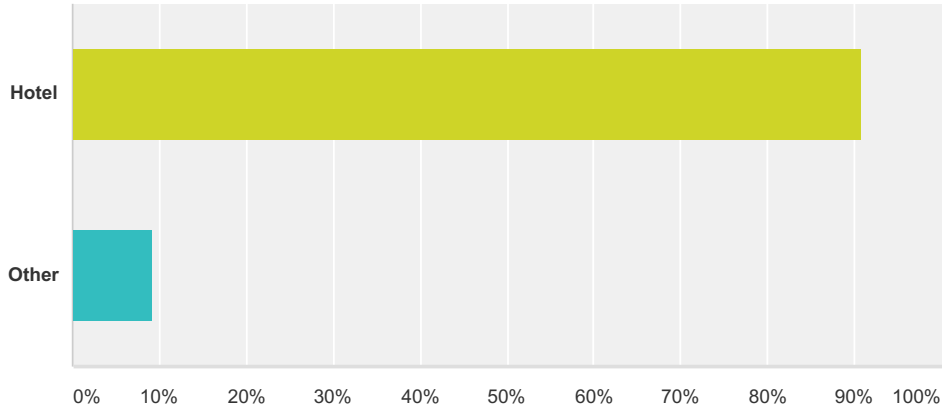
Answer Choices	Responses	
Bellingham	**68.18%**	15
Downtown Bellingham	**13.64%**	3

Birch Bay	**0.00%**	0
Blaine	**0.00%**	0
Everson	**0.00%**	0
Fairhaven	**13.64%**	3
Ferndale	**0.00%**	0
Highway 20	**0.00%**	0
Highway 542	**0.00%**	0
Lummi Island	**0.00%**	0
Lynden	**0.00%**	0
Nooksack	**0.00%**	0
Point Roberts	**0.00%**	0
Sumas	**0.00%**	0
Other (please specify)	**4.55%**	1
Total		**22**

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Inn at Lynden	6/9/2017 3:20 PM

Q2 What category best describes the entity you represent?

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Hotel	**90.91%**	20
Other	**9.09%**	2
Total		**22**

Q3 In order of significance to the county and visitor, please list what you consider the Top Five Cultural Heritage Attractions/Events/Activities in Bellingham/Whatcom County.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 15

Answer Choices	Responses	
1.	**100.00%**	7
2.	**85.71%**	6
3.	**85.71%**	6
4.	**85.71%**	6
5.	**85.71%**	6

#	1.	Date
1	Interurban Trail and environs	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Ski to Sea	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	WWU Sculpture garden	6/12/2017 12:08 AM
4	Ski to Sea	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	Whatcom Museum	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	Whatcom Museum & Lightcatcher Building	6/9/2017 3:24 PM
7	Western	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**2.**	**Date**
1	Bellingham Bay and environs	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Lynden Raspberry Festival	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Light-catcher museum	6/12/2017 12:08 AM
4	Western Washington spring graduations	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	WWU sculpture collection	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	Concerts: MBT, Wild Buff	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**3.**	**Date**
1	Baker Theatre	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Beer Week	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Mt Baker Theater	6/12/2017 12:08 AM
4	Summer soccer tournaments	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	Fairhaven and Downtown Bellingham historic buildings	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	Breweries	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**4.**	**Date**
1	Whatcom Falls Park	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Monthly Art Walks downtown & in Fairhaven	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Ski to Sea	6/12/2017 12:08 AM

4	Bellingham Bells games	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	Mt. Baker Theater	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	Water Front	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**5.**	**Date**
1	Fairhaven	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Deming Logging Show	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Good time girls walking tours	6/12/2017 12:08 AM
4	Mount Baker	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	Pickford	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	Hiking/Bikimg	6/9/2017 11:41 AM

Q4 As a cultural heritage tourism destination, what do you consider Bellingham/Whatcom County's greatest:

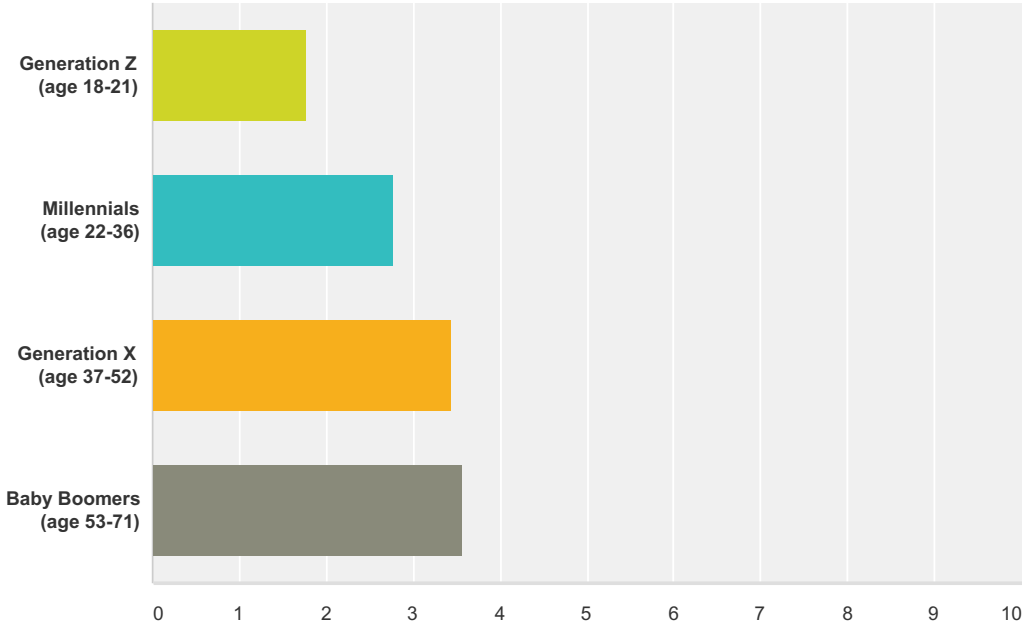
Answered: 7 Skipped: 15

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strength:	**100.00%**	7
Weakness:	**85.71%**	6
Opportunity:	**85.71%**	6
Threat:	**71.43%**	5

#	Strength:	Date
1	laid back pace, day/ short stay access to Vancouver/ Seattle visitor	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Diversity of events	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	I own a vacation rental with over 350 guests, have never had a guest who came for cultural heritage	6/12/2017 12:08 AM
4	Outdoor activities	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
5	Sense of local history and historic buildings	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
6	renovating old with class and old character	6/9/2017 1:43 PM
7	Community Involvement	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**Weakness:**	**Date**
1	wayfinding and information for visitor	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Historical sites not very well marked or marketed	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Too many hotels	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
4	Lack of cohesive fine and performing arts programming	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
5	embodying native culture through art	6/9/2017 1:43 PM
6	Canadian Dollar	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**Opportunity:**	**Date**
1	creating an inviting message and delivery system that can be sustained and maintained	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Signage/maps/marketing for historical places	6/14/2017 2:54 PM
3	Don't know	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
4	Well-funded, easy to use guide for mobile devices of cohesive cultural and arts programming	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
5	Co partner with tribes to Co create	6/9/2017 1:43 PM
6	New Waterfront	6/9/2017 11:41 AM
#	**Threat:**	**Date**
1	limited attractive access, poor grooming/reduced view/	6/19/2017 2:30 PM
2	Traffic	6/10/2017 8:43 PM
3	Continuation of the weakness listed above	6/9/2017 3:39 PM
4	condos and trendy suburban	6/9/2017 1:43 PM
5	Air BNB	6/9/2017 11:41 AM

Q5 Please rank, in order of preference, the importance of these demographic audiences to your organization in the next three years

Answered: 9 Skipped: 13

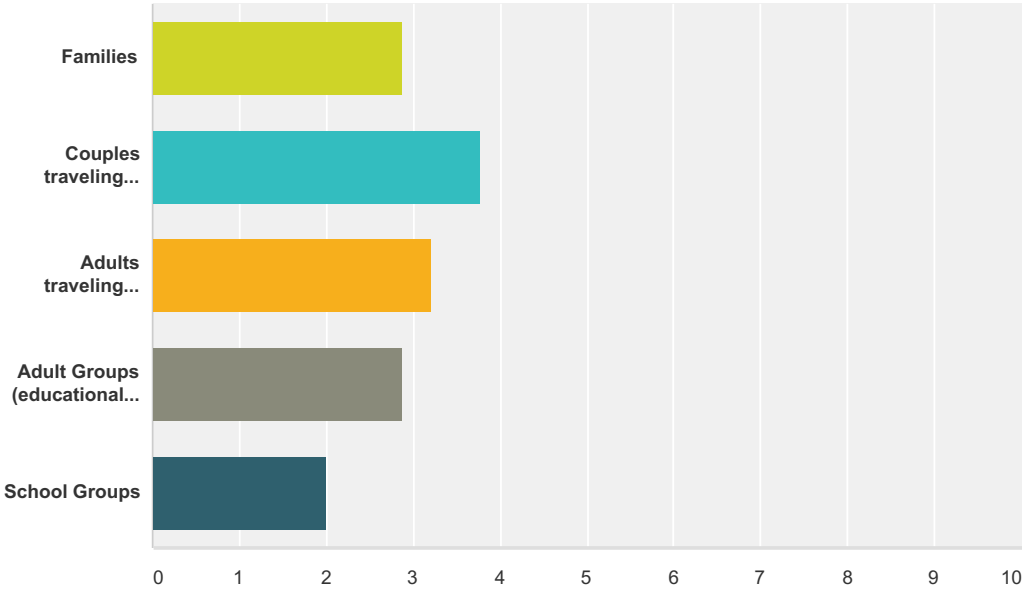


	Least Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Most Important	Total	Weighted Average
Generation Z (age 18-21)	**44.44%** 4	**33.33%** 3	**22.22%** 2	**0.00%** 0	9	1.78
Millennials (age 22-36)	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 3	**55.56%** 5	**11.11%** 1	9	2.78
Generation X (age 37-52)	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**55.56%** 5	**44.44%** 4	9	3.44
Baby Boomers (age 53-71)	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**44.44%** 4	**55.56%** 5	9	3.56

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	NOTE: women make the reservations	6/19/2017 2:35 PM
2	intentional community efforts	6/9/2017 1:45 PM

Q6 Please rank, in order of preference, the importance of these audience profiles to your organization in the next three years

Answered: 9 Skipped: 13

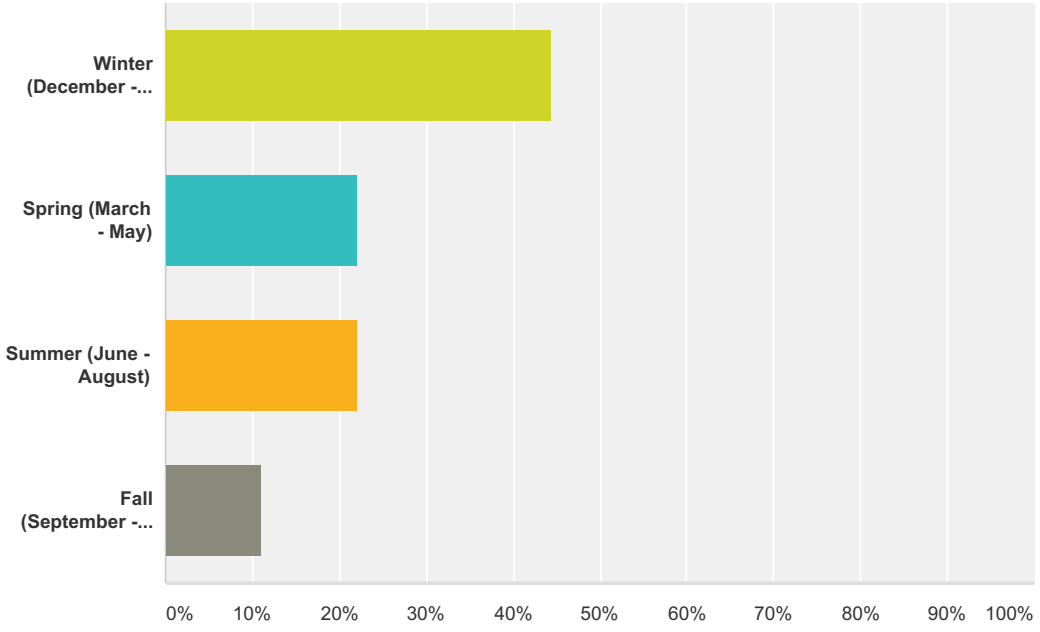


	Least important	Somewhat important	Important	Most important	Total	Weighted Average
Families	**12.50%** 1	**12.50%** 1	**50.00%** 4	**25.00%** 2	8	2.88
Couples traveling without children	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**22.22%** 2	**77.78%** 7	9	3.78
Adults traveling independently	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**55.56%** 5	**33.33%** 3	9	3.22
Adult Groups (educational or special interest, group tours, niche audiences)	**11.11%** 1	**22.22%** 2	**33.33%** 3	**33.33%** 3	9	2.89
School Groups	**44.44%** 4	**22.22%** 2	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	9	2.00

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	business guests with "explore" time	6/19/2017 2:35 PM
2	relocating	6/9/2017 1:45 PM

Q7 What time of year is most important to attract cultural heritage tourists to your organization or business in the next three years?

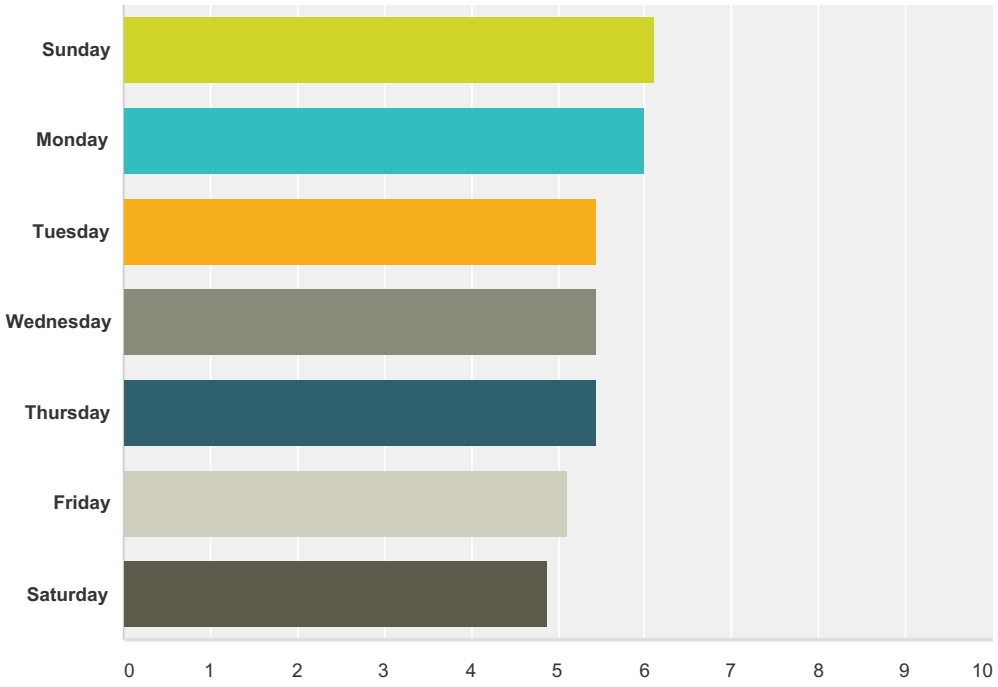
Answered: 9 Skipped: 13



Answer Choices	Responses	
Winter (December - February)	**44.44%**	4
Spring (March - May)	**22.22%**	2
Summer (June - August)	**22.22%**	2
Fall (September - November)	**11.11%**	1
Total		**9**

Q8 On a scale of 1-7, with 7 as most important, please rank the days of the week you are most interested in hosting more cultural heritage visitors to your organization or business in the next three years.

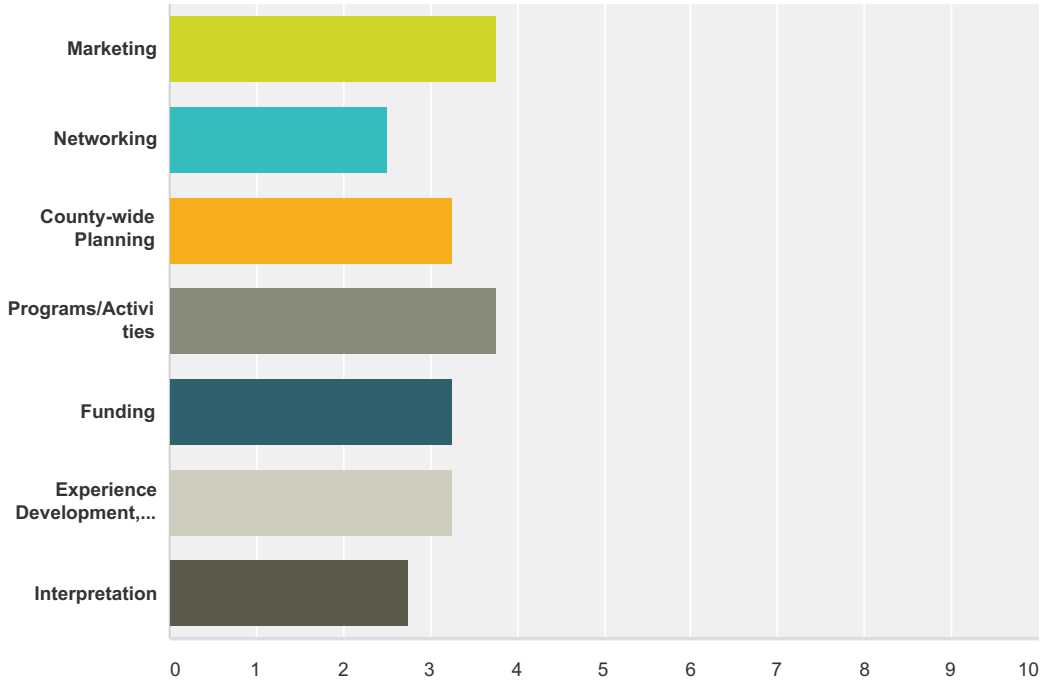
Answered: 9 Skipped: 13



	Least important - 1	2	3	Important - 4	5	6	Most important - 7	Total	Weighted Average
Sunday	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	**55.56%** 5	9	6.11
Monday	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**22.22%** 2	**22.22%** 2	**44.44%** 4	9	6.00
Tuesday	**11.11%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	**44.44%** 4	9	5.44
Wednesday	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**44.44%** 4	9	5.44
Thursday	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**44.44%** 4	9	5.44
Friday	**0.00%** 0	**22.22%** 2	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**55.56%** 5	9	5.11
Saturday	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**11.11%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**11.11%** 1	**44.44%** 4	9	4.89

Q9 What types of partnerships would you like to see result from this plan?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 18



	Least important	Somewhat important	Important	Most important	Total	Weighted Average
Marketing	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**25.00%** 1	**75.00%** 3	4	3.75
Networking	**0.00%** 0	**75.00%** 3	**0.00%** 0	**25.00%** 1	4	2.50
County-wide Planning	**0.00%** 0	**25.00%** 1	**25.00%** 1	**50.00%** 2	4	3.25
Programs/Activities	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**25.00%** 1	**75.00%** 3	4	3.75
Funding	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**75.00%** 3	**25.00%** 1	4	3.25
Experience Development, Enhancement	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**75.00%** 3	**25.00%** 1	4	3.25
Interpretation	**0.00%** 0	**50.00%** 2	**25.00%** 1	**25.00%** 1	4	2.75

#	Other (please specify)	Date
	There are no responses.	

Q10 Name one activity/project that should be accomplished in the short term (6-12 months) to help grow Bellingham/ Whatcom County as a Cultural Heritage Tourism Destination.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 19

#	Responses	Date
1	Signage of historical sites	6/14/2017 3:01 PM
2	Guide to opportunities for Smartphones	6/9/2017 3:51 PM
3	art kiosks with information about key interest areas	6/9/2017 1:50 PM

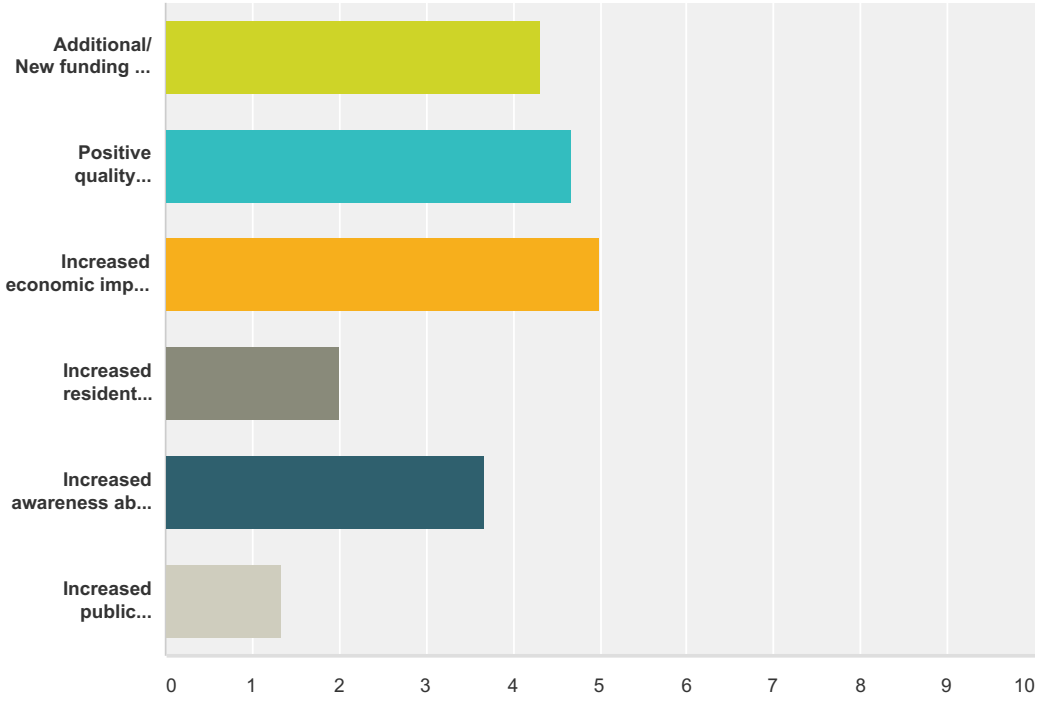
Q11 Looking ahead five years, please name a long range project to improve or expand Bellingham/ Whatcom County's Cultural Heritage Tourism.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 19

#	Responses	Date
1	attracting the Asian visitor	6/14/2017 3:01 PM
2	Support for entreprenureal endeavors in programming	6/9/2017 3:51 PM
3	waterfront revitalize with historic reference and keeping downtown alive and thriving	6/9/2017 1:50 PM

Q12 Please rank, in order of priority, how the success of the Cultural Heritage Tourism plan and its implementation should be measured.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 19



	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Score
Additional/ New funding for cultural heritage tourism	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**66.67%** 2	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	3	4.33
Positive quality cultural heritage visitor experiences	**33.33%** 1	**33.33%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	3	4.67
Increased economic impact from cultural heritage tourism	**66.67%** 2	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	3	5.00
Increased resident engagement in cultural heritage tourism activities, events, programs	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**33.33%** 1	**33.33%** 1	3	2.00
Increased awareness about Bellingham/Whatcom County as a cultural heritage destination	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**33.33%** 1	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**0.00%** 0	3	3.67
Increased public recognition for the value of cultural heritage tourism	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**0.00%** 0	**33.33%** 1	**66.67%** 2	3	1.33

Q13 Please provide any additional comments or suggestions to help inform the Cultural Heritage Tourism Plan and the setting of goals, objectives and desired outcomes.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 20

#	Responses	Date
1	Cultural heritage will always be number two behind natural heritage here in Whatcom County. Emphasis should be placed on modern cultural entertainment (concerts, contemporary arts, PNW food and culture), not history or historic resources. And this comes from a historian and lover of the arts. Our historic cultural resources just aren't that great and never will be.	6/9/2017 3:51 PM
2	Include the bay history with conservation efforts and environmental awareness or lack and to mostly include the first nation and not just rich white historical mementos	6/9/2017 1:50 PM

Q14 Please list the names (plus affiliation, and email addresses or phone numbers, if available) of any individuals we should send this survey to for completion.

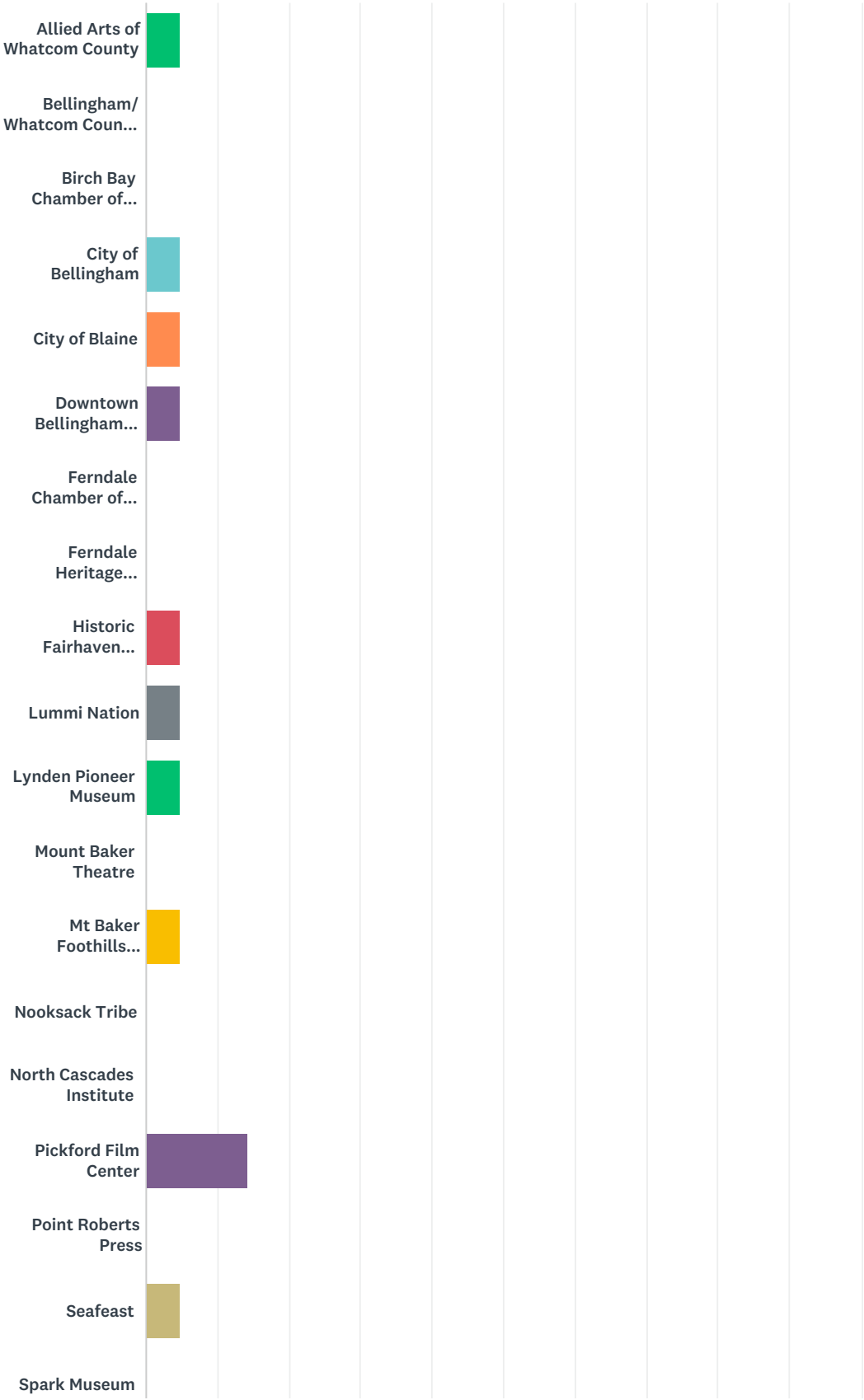
Answered: 0 Skipped: 22

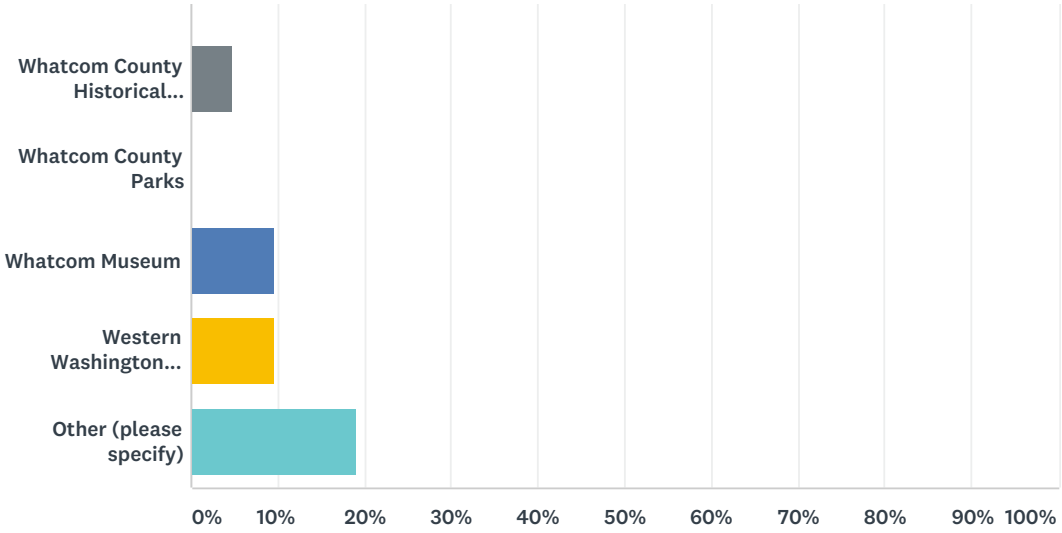
Answer Choices	Responses	
Name/contact info:	0.00%	0
Name/contact info:	0.00%	0
Name/contact info:	0.00%	0

#	Name/contact info:	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Name/contact info:	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Name/contact info:	Date
	There are no responses.	

Q1 What is the name of your organization, agency or business?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0





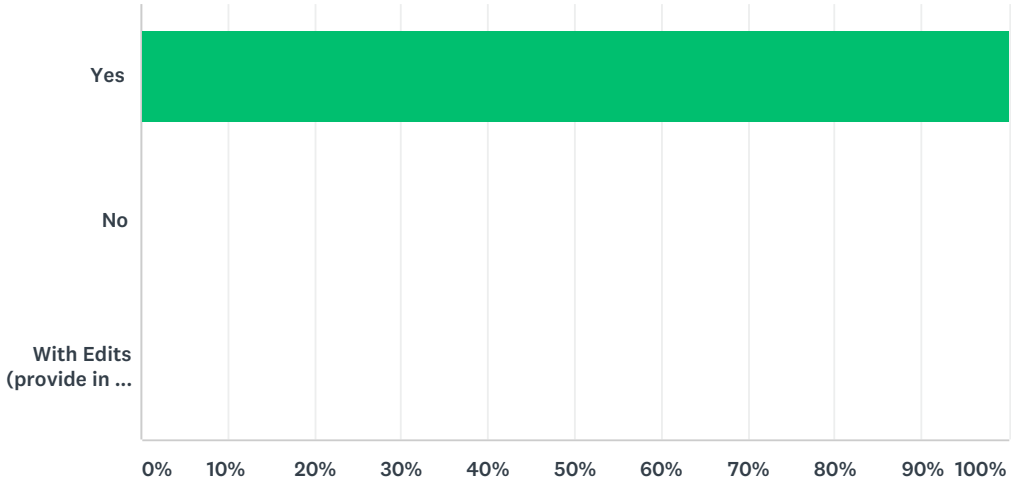
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Allied Arts of Whatcom County	4.76%	1
Bellingham/ Whatcom County Tourism	0.00%	0
Birch Bay Chamber of Commerce	0.00%	0
City of Bellingham	4.76%	1
City of Blaine	4.76%	1
Downtown Bellingham Partnership	4.76%	1
Ferndale Chamber of Commerce	0.00%	0
Ferndale Heritage Society	0.00%	0
Historic Fairhaven Association	4.76%	1
Lummi Nation	4.76%	1
Lynden Pioneer Museum	4.76%	1
Mount Baker Theatre	0.00%	0
Mt Baker Foothills Chamber of Commerce	4.76%	1
Nooksack Tribe	0.00%	0
North Cascades Institute	0.00%	0
Pickford Film Center	14.29%	3
Point Roberts Press	0.00%	0
Seafeast	4.76%	1
Spark Museum	0.00%	0
Whatcom County Historical Society	4.76%	1
Whatcom County Parks	0.00%	0
Whatcom Museum	9.52%	2
Western Washington University	9.52%	2

Other (please specify)	19.05%	4
TOTAL		21

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Sylvia Center for the Arts	8/24/2017 1:55 PM
2	Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism	8/17/2017 6:48 PM
3	Sylvia Center for the Arts	8/17/2017 5:54 PM
4	WhTCOM MARITIME ASSOCIATION	8/17/2017 4:19 PM

Q2 Do you agree with draft Goal 1: Improve Collaboration and communication among all cultural heritage tourism stakeholders?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

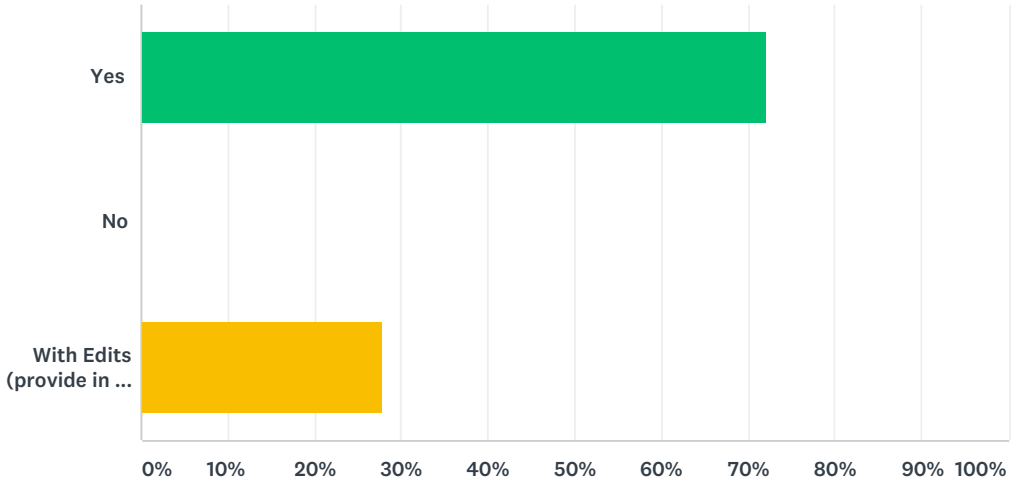


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	19
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		19

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	(Question: whose will be the responsibility and what will be the criteria for determining who is considered a CHT stakeholder, in terms of new or growing organizations being added in the future?)	8/17/2017 6:00 PM
2	Lower case C in collaboration	8/14/2017 2:19 PM

Q3 Do you agree with draft Goal 2: Strengthen partnerships with historic preservation groups such as the Whatcom Historical Society, Daughters of the Pioneers, and the Ferndale Heritage Society?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

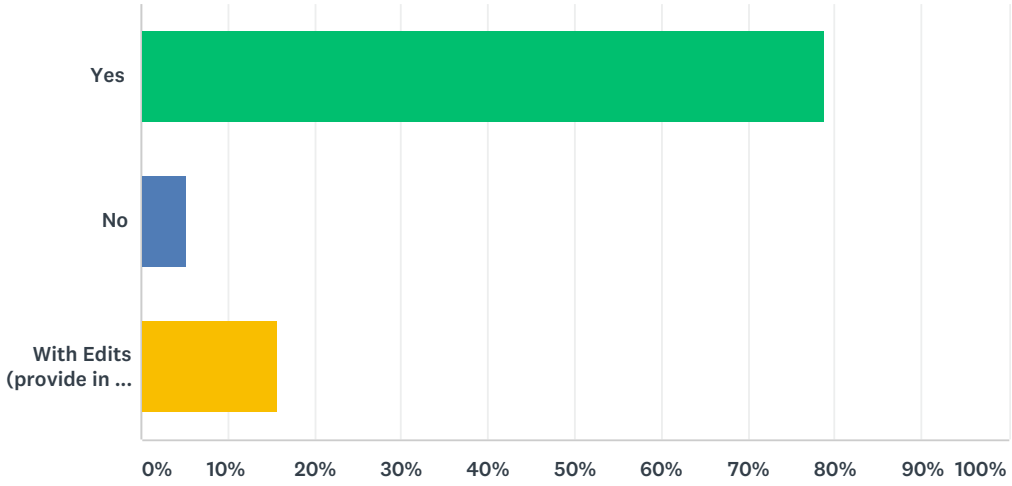


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	72.22%	13
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	27.78%	5
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	I would also include the various Historic Preservation Commissions in Whatcom County such as Bellingham and Lynden.	8/28/2017 2:26 PM
2	Strengthening should not be limited to historic preservation groups. Edit to: "Strengthen partnerships among all cultural heritage tourism stakeholders".	8/25/2017 3:05 PM
3	I'm guessing these organizations are simply listed as examples, as there are other organizations that could be included in this list. Does listing examples sound too limiting?	8/22/2017 7:52 PM
4	I think we're missing some key partnerships here - or at least the mention of some effort to strengthen partnerships with our Native history/historians. I see that Goal 3 is geared toward Lummi and Nooksack, but there is no overt and intentional drive to communicate our native history - which is different than Goal 3.	8/21/2017 9:36 AM
5	I am assuming that not all Whatcom County historic preservation groups need to be listed here in order to be included.	8/18/2017 5:51 PM
6	Add: The Whatcom Maritime Association	8/17/2017 4:24 PM
7	Need more detail here.	8/11/2017 1:02 PM

Q4 Do you agree with draft Goal 3: Engage with the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe to create partnership opportunities.

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

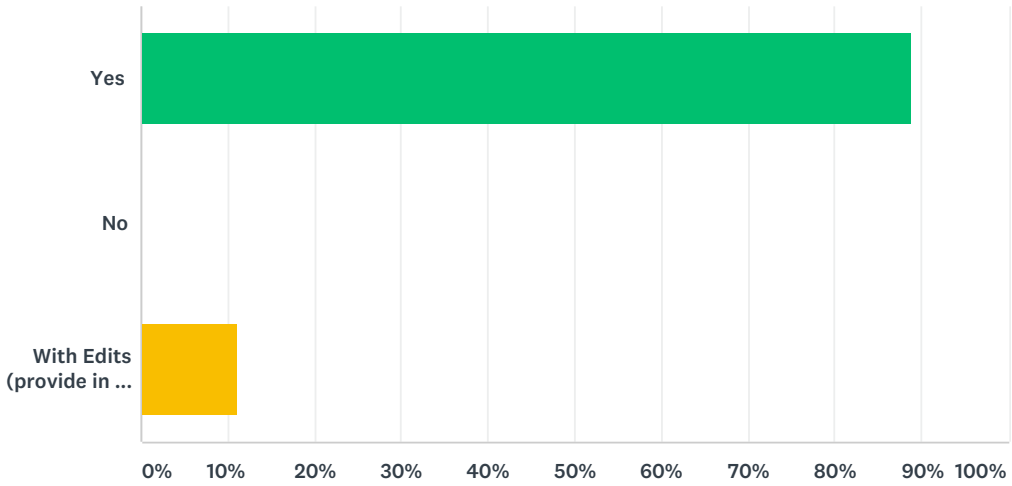


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	78.95%	15
No	5.26%	1
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	15.79%	3
TOTAL		19

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	Comments I would include the Whatcom Museum's new Salish gallery and accompanying programs since involvement with the Lummi Nation is on-going and involves schools and students.	8/28/2017 2:26 PM
2	Comments Not certain they should be singled out instead of being included as cultural heritage tourism stakeholders.	8/25/2017 3:05 PM
3	Comments It seems like the text should include for the reason in this case to create the partnership is to develop cultural heritage tourism.	8/18/2017 5:51 PM
4	Comments I don't recall to what extent this outreach has already occurred, but this goal as drafted assumes that Lummi/Nooksack *want* partnership opportunities—if this dialogue has not already been initiated, perhaps it should be more like “engage … to identify potential partnership opportunities”?	8/17/2017 6:00 PM
5	Comments There is some cultural sensitivity, amongst some tribal members, on what can be shared.	8/11/2017 5:12 PM

Q5 Do you agree with draft Goal 4: Strengthen connections between Whatcom County colleges/universities and local communities, businesses, attractions and lodging to offer more experiences for students, their families and other visitors

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

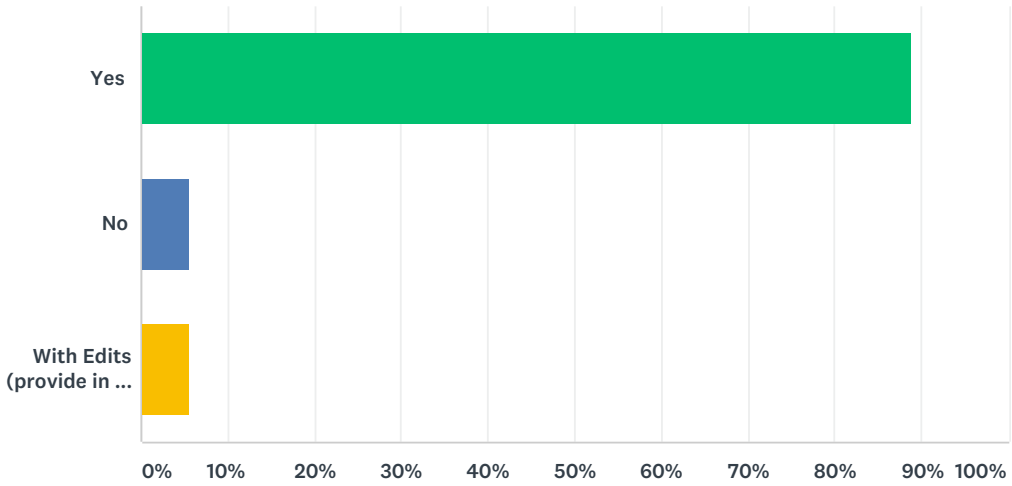


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	16
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	11.11%	2
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	We already offer plenty of experiences for students, their families and other visitors. We want to engage more students, families and visitors.	8/22/2017 5:17 PM
2	I think "visitors" should come first - "students" and "families" can be covered under the term "visitors." The way it is written now, it comes across a little student-centric, and I think we should be building language around "visitors." Students and parents ARE visitors, but not all visitors are students and parents..	8/21/2017 9:36 AM
3	Add: historic preservation groups	8/17/2017 4:24 PM
4	Be sure to include the Northwest Indian College and Silver Reef Casino, Hotel and Spa.	8/11/2017 5:12 PM

Q6 Do you agree with draft Goal 5. Encourage collaborations between Main Street and economic development organizations such as the Downtown Bellingham Partnership, Historic Fairhaven Association and similar groups in other cities

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

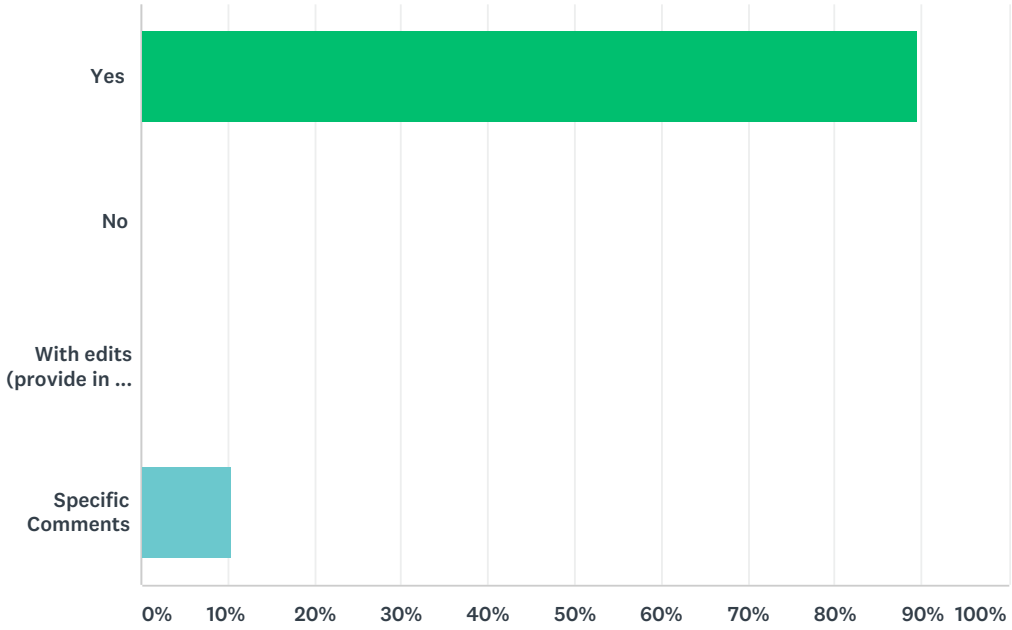


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	16
No	5.56%	1
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	5.56%	1
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	What is Main Street?	8/17/2017 6:00 PM
2	Include working with Team Whatcom, organized by the Port of Bellingham, a collaboration of organizations and agencies working together to ensure that investment, development and innovation has a strong platform.	8/11/2017 5:12 PM

Q7 Do you agree with Draft Goal 6: Encourage providers to expand existing or create new cultural heritage tourism experiences (could be products or services) to increase shoulder and off-season visitation and spending in Whatcom County

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

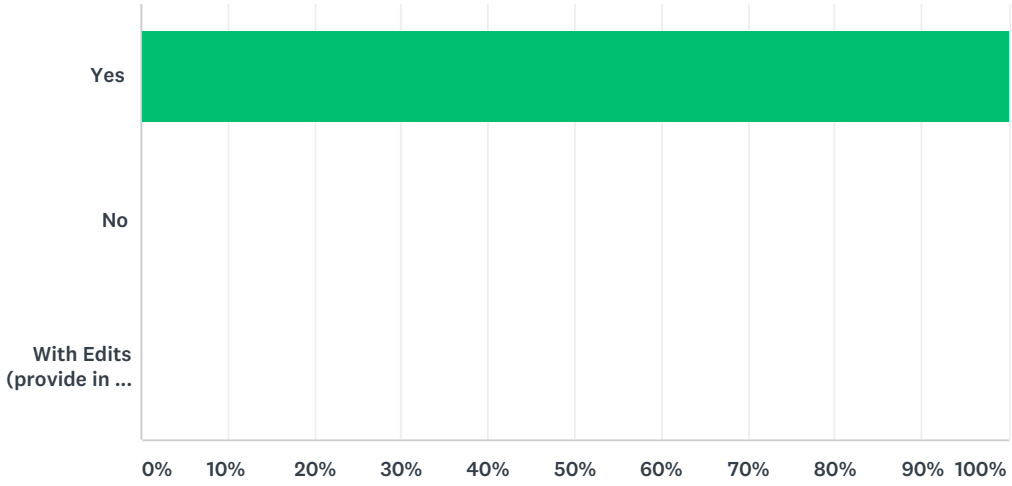


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89.47%	17
No	0.00%	0
With edits (provide in the Comment Section)	0.00%	0
Specific Comments	10.53%	2
TOTAL		19

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS	DATE
1	Again, there are resources at the Whatcom Museum many do not know about: the Maritime History gallery, Hall of Birds, and Salish galleries that could be resources for many other groups.	8/28/2017 2:28 PM
2	Goals that align with each of the draft benchmarks for success (page 44) need to be inserted. For example, enhanced sense of place, and increased community value and pride are not mentioned anywhere but in the Measurement section.	8/25/2017 3:10 PM

Q8 Do you agree with draft Goal 7. Develop county-wide interpretive products to share the history of its people, industry, and heritage

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

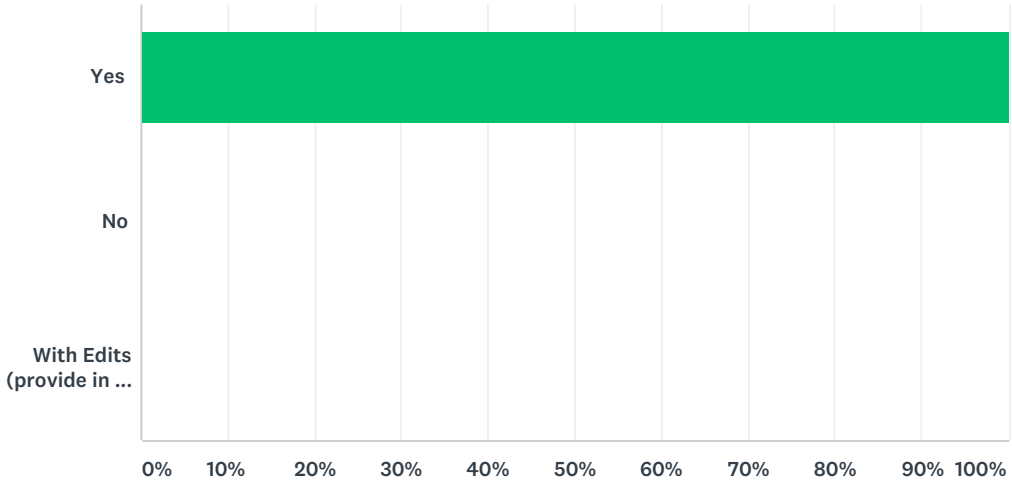


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	18
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q9 Do you agree with draft Goal 8. Increase funding availability for cultural heritage tourism capital projects, programs, activities and products

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

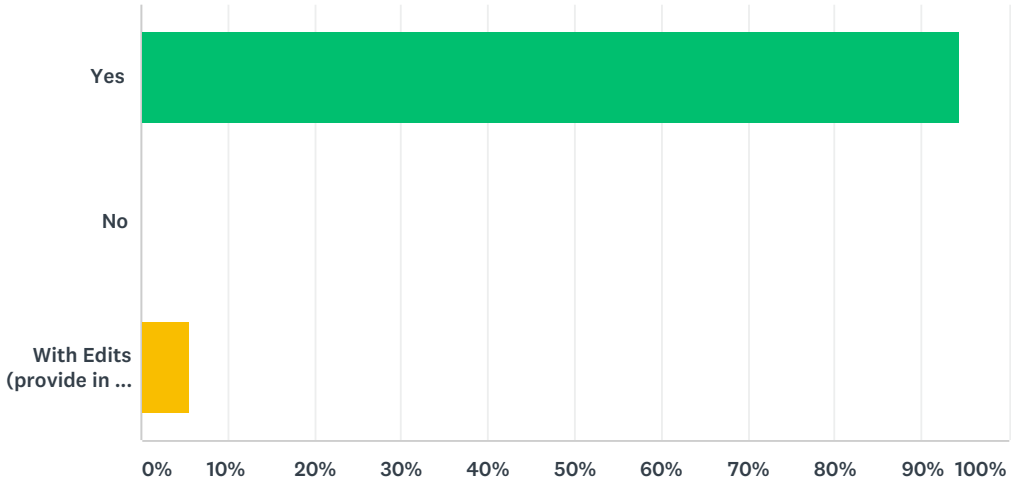


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	19
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section below)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		19

#	SPECIFIC COMMENTS/EDITS"	DATE
1	An additional goal should be to "preserve, protect and enhance historic and cultural sites." Accomplishing this goes beyond funding, to include encouraging policies and building public stewardship.	8/25/2017 3:10 PM
2	And plain old operating funds would probably benefit many local cultural nonprofits allowing them to increase capacity to provide more programs.	8/22/2017 5:19 PM
3	This funding would include helping many non-profit organizations working towards promoting such.	8/11/2017 5:14 PM

Q10 Do you agree with Draft Goal 9: Establish unified messaging and marketing platform to promote all of Whatcom County's cultural heritage experiences

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

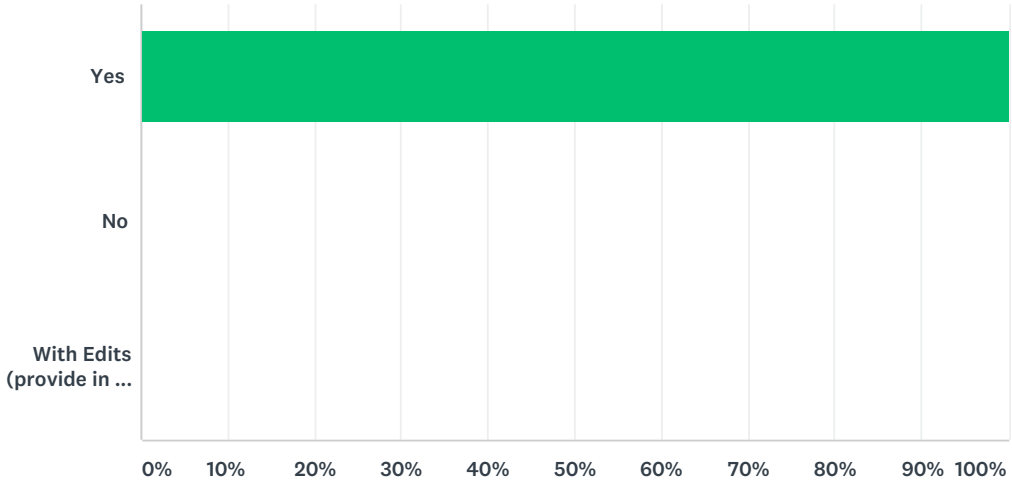


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.44%	17
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section)	5.56%	1
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC EDITS/COMMENTS	DATE
1	What I am hearing so far (in the introductory paragraphs above) is mixing/equating the outdoorsy, recreational draw with cultural heritage, and they are vastly different things (it seems?). People who come to ski, kayak, bike and hike the trails are not necessarily "'cultural heritage" tourists - but they could be. I would like to see more effort put in to the actual cultural heritage of Whatcom Co., and not try to equate it with outdoor sports and rec. It would be great to somehow capitalize on the sports and rec activities to dovetail with actual cultural heritage activities (Goals10 and 11). It just seems important to separate the language around these things and ensure the money and effort is going to the correct places.	8/21/2017 9:46 AM
2	This seems logical for interpretive signage and wayfinding that the county is currently pursuing. How to do this with interpretive programs already in progress or in place.	8/18/2017 5:58 PM
3	Not sure if everyone is unified on the messaging and marketing...probably need to work on this. Biking on the Lummi Indian Reservation is not encouraged. Kayaking over to Portage Island is not encouraged. These reservation lands were set aside for the Lummi people and not there for everyone's recreation. It's called a reservation for a reason. It should be a unified effort that all support this. This is one of those sensitive areas I was talking about.	8/11/2017 5:26 PM

Q11 Do you agree with Draft Goal 10: Cross-market cultural heritage activities and attractions with other like venues (i.e. museums promote each other's exhibits) to encourage county-wide visitation to multiple destinations

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2

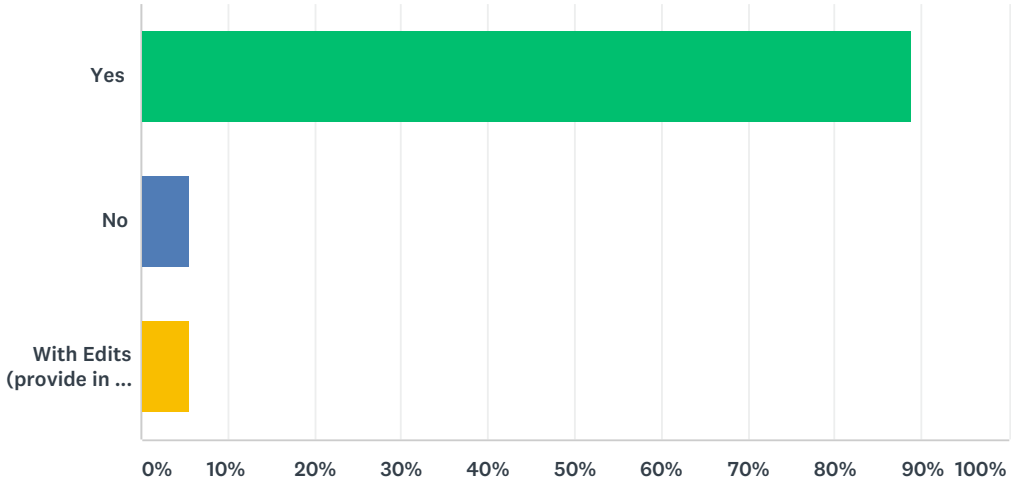


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	19
No	0.00%	0
With Edits (provide in the Comment section)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		19

#	SPECIFIC EDITS/COMMENTS	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q12 Do you agree with Draft Goal 11: Cross-market cultural heritage activities with recreation-based experiences

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3

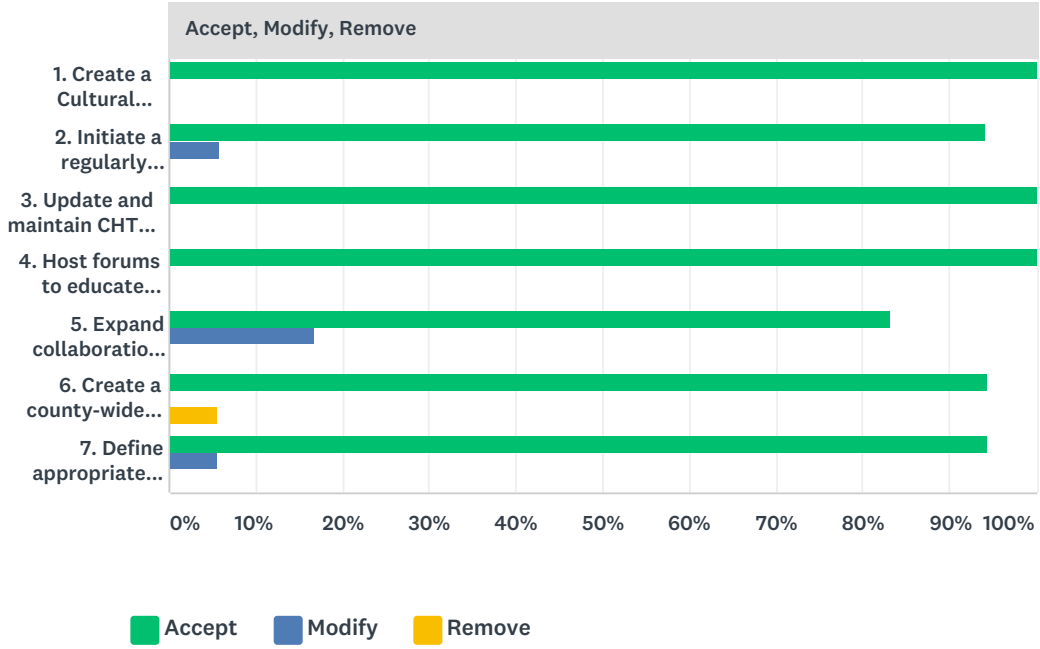


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	16
No	5.56%	1
With Edits (provide in the Comment section)	5.56%	1
TOTAL		18

#	SPECIFIC EDITS/COMMENTS	DATE
1	Cross-market cultural heritage experiences with recreational based activities.	8/18/2017 5:58 PM
2	Not sure if everyone is unified on the messaging and marketing...probably need to work on this. Biking on the Lummi Indian Reservation is not encouraged. Kayaking over to Portage Island is not encouraged. These reservation lands were set aside for the Lummi people and not there for everyone's recreation. It's called a reservation for a reason. It should be a unified effort that all support this. This is one of those sensitive areas I was talking about.	8/11/2017 5:26 PM

Q13 The following strategies have been drafted for PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION. Please rate these strategies to determine if they are acceptable for finalization or whether they need more work.

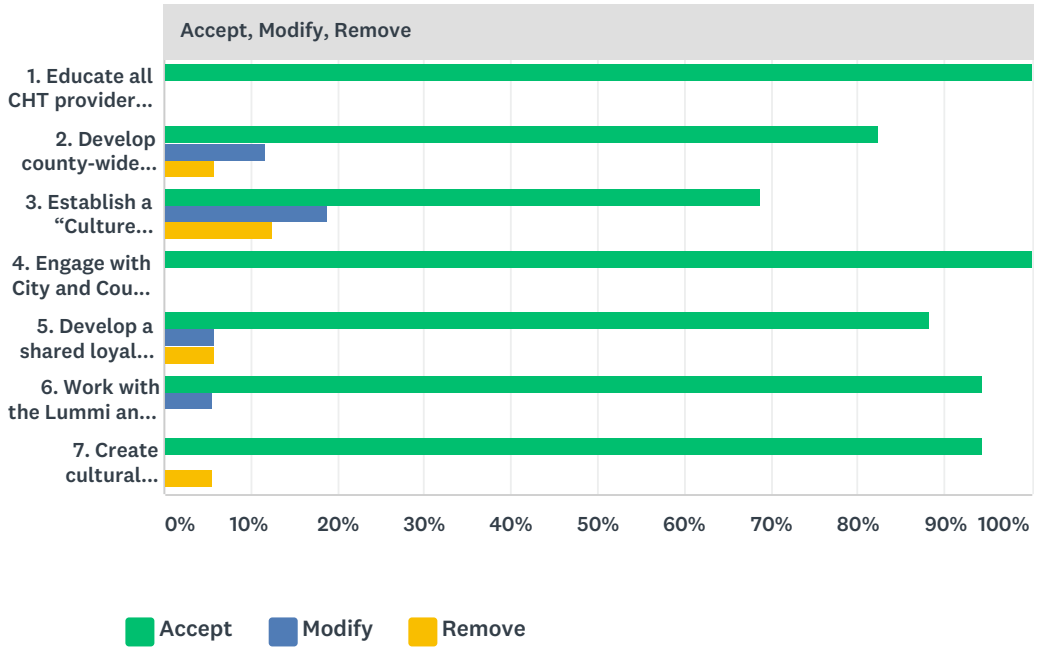
Answered: 18 Skipped: 3



Accept, Modify, Remove	ACCEPT	MODIFY	REMOVE	TOTAL
1. Create a Cultural Heritage Tourism Steering Committee through BWCT to advise on implementation of the Plan	100.00% 18	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18
2. Initiate a regularly scheduled forum for information exchange among cultural heritage tourism stakeholders	94.12% 16	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	17
3. Update and maintain CHT Asset Inventory and evaluate “visitor ready” standards	100.00% 16	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16
4. Host forums to educate stakeholders, elected officials, tourism leaders and front-line tourism personnel on value of cultural heritage tourism to county, and showcase available cultural heritage experiences (local familiarization tour)	100.00% 17	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	17
5. Expand collaboration beyond original stakeholder group to include all cultural heritage providers county-wide	83.33% 15	16.67% 3	0.00% 0	18
6. Create a county-wide collision calendar of complimentary activities, festival days, and “open and available” days for planning new events or activities	94.44% 17	0.00% 0	5.56% 1	18
7. Define appropriate ways to educate visitors about Lummi and Nooksack culture and heritage	94.44% 17	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	18

Q14 The following strategies have been drafted for PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT/ENHANCEMENT Goals. Please rate these strategies to determine if they are acceptable for finalization or whether they need more work.

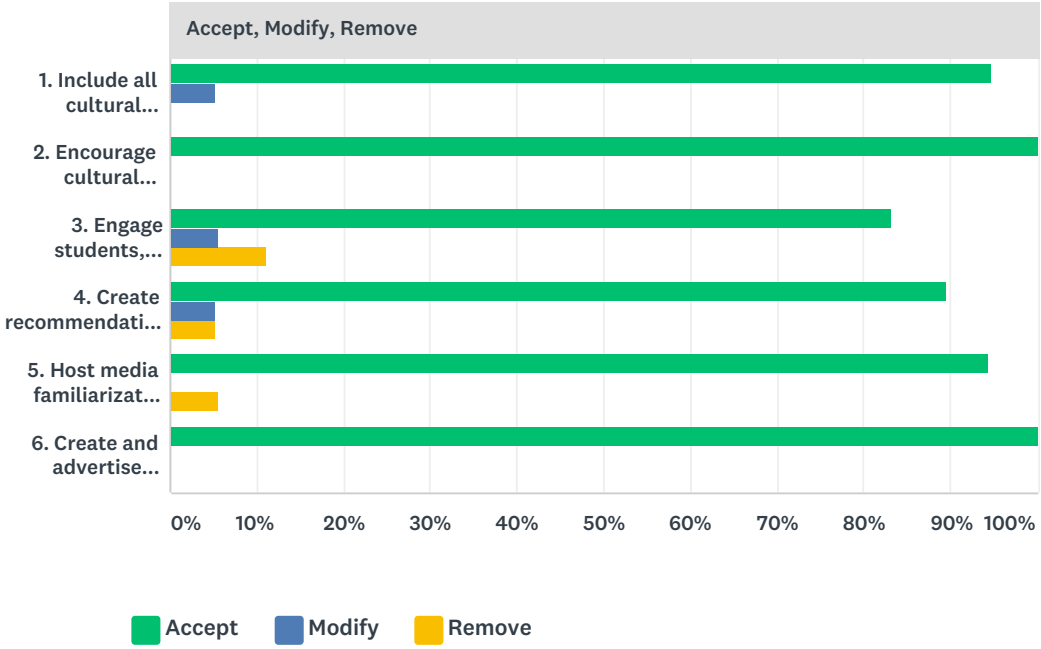
Answered: 19 Skipped: 2



Accept, Modify, Remove	ACCEPT	MODIFY	REMOVE	TOTAL
1. Educate all CHT providers about all Tourism Promotion Grant funding opportunities.	100.00% 18	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	18
2. Develop county-wide maritime interpretation products to connect waterfront cities of Bellingham, Blaine, Birch Bay and Semiahmoo and increase visitation	82.35% 14	11.76% 2	5.88% 1	17
3. Establish a "Culture Shuttle" to move visitors around the county (from hotels, to downtown Bellingham, to Fairhaven, to Lynden, etc.)	68.75% 11	18.75% 3	12.50% 2	16
4. Engage with City and County Parks' Department to help build capacity, develop targeted programs, etc.	100.00% 19	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	19
5. Develop a shared loyalty program, or "Cultural Heritage" passport	88.24% 15	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	17
6. Work with the Lummi and Nooksack to identify, map and enhance interpretation of story poles located around the county	94.44% 17	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	18
7. Create cultural heritage itineraries for specific target audiences (Millennials, Regional/Seattle-Vancouver, Recreation-based travelers, etc)	94.44% 17	0.00% 0	5.56% 1	18

Q15 The following strategies have been drafted for MARKETING Goals. Please rate these strategies to determine if they are acceptable for finalization or whether they need more work.

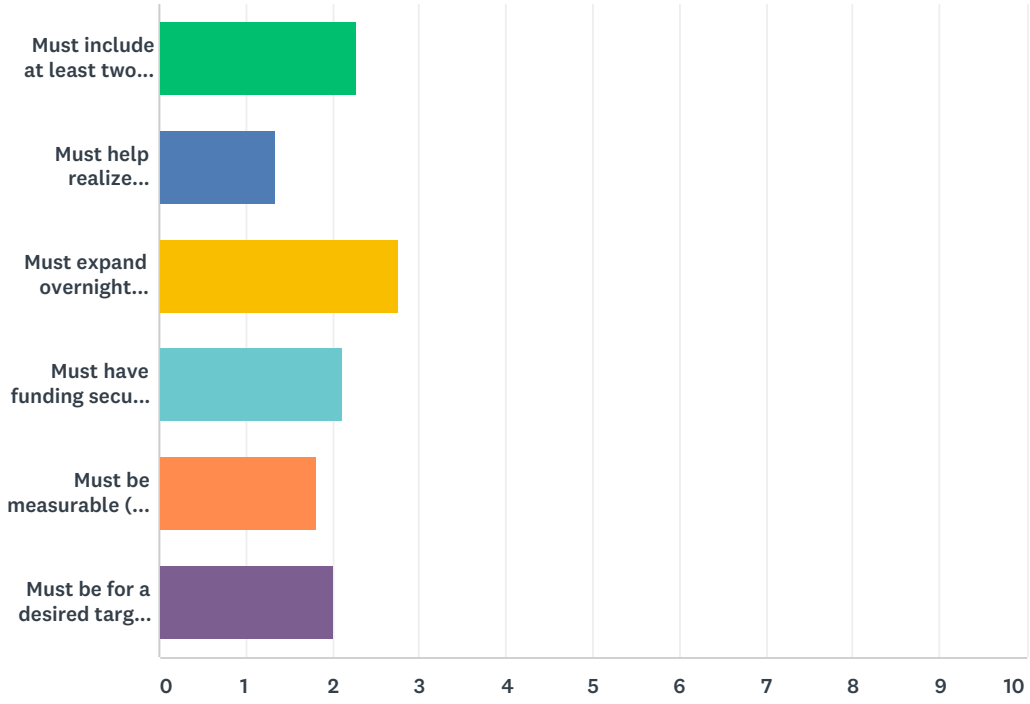
Answered: 19 Skipped: 2



Accept, Modify, Remove				
	ACCEPT	MODIFY	REMOVE	TOTAL
1. Include all cultural heritage attractions, activities and events on various digital platforms	94.74% 18	5.26% 1	0.00% 0	19
2. Encourage cultural heritage organizations and attractions to utilize and link to Bellingham Whatcom County Tourism digital and social media platforms	100.00% 19	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	19
3. Engage students, tourists and the general public to create videos about their positive CHT experiences in Bellingham/Whatcom county to encourage viral promotion of experiences	83.33% 15	5.56% 1	11.11% 2	18
4. Create recommendation lists for visitors (i.e. “If you enjoyed this, then visit XYZ”) to help cross-market attractions and activities around the county	89.47% 17	5.26% 1	5.26% 1	19
5. Host media familiarization tour to showcase cultural heritage assets, experiences in tandem with culinary and nature-based activities	94.44% 17	0.00% 0	5.56% 1	18
6. Create and advertise packages between existing venues, events, hotels, etc. to promote specific CHT experiences, especially in the off-season	100.00% 19	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	19

Q16 Please rate the importance of the following criteria for inclusion in the Strategy Screen.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 3



	5 - STRONGLY AGREE	4 - SOMEWHAT AGREE	3 -	2- SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	1- STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Must include at least two partners	27.78% 5	38.89% 7	16.67% 3	11.11% 2	5.56% 1	18	2.28
Must help realize cultural heritage tourism vision	83.33% 15	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	18	1.33
Must expand overnight visitation	11.76% 2	41.18% 7	11.76% 2	29.41% 5	5.88% 1	17	2.76
Must have funding secured or identified	23.53% 4	47.06% 8	23.53% 4	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	17	2.12
Must be measurable (in terms of increased attendance, economic impact, positive awareness)	41.18% 7	41.18% 7	11.76% 2	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	17	1.82
Must be for a desired target audience	25.00% 4	50.00% 8	25.00% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16	2.00

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Must have a high degree of visitor readiness.	8/25/2017 3:10 PM

APPENDIX J:
ROGER BROOKS ASSESSMENT REPORT

Assessment Findings and Suggestions Report

Bellingham & Neighboring Communities

July, 2015

ROGER BROOKS
International

Opportunity Assessment

INTRODUCTION

In July of 2015, an Opportunity Assessment of Bellingham and parts of Whatcom County, Washington, was conducted, and the findings were presented in a two-and-a-half hour workshop. The assessment provides an unbiased overview of the area - how it is seen by a visitor. It includes a review of local marketing efforts, signage, attractions, critical mass, retail mix, ease of getting around, customer service, visitor amenities such as parking and public restrooms, overall appeal, and the community's ability to attract overnight visitors.

In performing the Opportunity Assessment, we looked at the area through the eyes of a first-time visitor. No prior research was facilitated, and no community representatives were contacted except to set up the project. The town and surrounding area were "secretly shopped." Any person looking to relocate their business, industry, or residence will come to your community and area as a visitor first. Tourism is the front door to all your economic development efforts.

Once potential visitors find information about your area, are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale? In the Marketing Assessment, we reviewed your visitor website and print marketing materials.

A typical community has five opportunities to close the sale:

1) Personal contact (visitor information centers, trade shows, etc.)
2) Websites
3) Brochures and printed materials
4) Publicity (articles)
5) Word of mouth - the most effective means

We searched the internet for activities, requested and reviewed printed materials, and looked for articles and third-party information. As we prepared for travel to Whatcom County, we searched both commercial and organizational websites promoting the area, tourism websites, and read travel articles and guidebooks.

The marketing assessment determined how effective the marketing was in convincing a potential visitor that the area would be worth a special trip, a stop, or an overnight stay. The key to the marketing assessment is to see if you have a primary lure that makes you worth a special trip of a one-hour drive - or from further away. The question on most visitors' minds is: What do you have that I can't get closer to home? What makes you worth a special trip?

Where most communities falter is when they merely provide "lists" of what the community has, whether it's truly "unique" or not. Nearly every community in North America promotes the usual list of diversions: local museums, shops and restaurants, plenty of lodging, golf, outdoor recreation, historic downtowns, scenic vistas, etc. Of course, nearly every visitor can do these things closer to home. So, what makes Bellingham and Whatcom County worth the trip?

Always promote your primary lure first - what makes you worth that special trip. THEN, promote

your diversionary, or "complementary" activities. Would you go to Anaheim, California, if Disneyland wasn't there? Do you think that Universal Studios and Knotts Berry Farm mind that Disneyland gets all the glory? Of course not. Eighty percent of all tourism spending is with those secondary activities. Disney does the heavy lifting in terms of advertising and promotion, and the diversionary activities benefit.

In a nutshell, the Marketing Effectiveness Assessment looks for what makes your community worth a special trip, or a great place to live, or to do business. We look for details. Do you give a reason for visiting, and do you provide enough information to make it easy to plan a trip? Are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale?

The second part of the assessment process is the On-site Assessment. During this part of the assessment, we spent more than a week in the area, looking at enticements from highways and freeways (signs, billboards, something that would get a visitor to stop), beautification and overall curb appeal, wayfinding (ease of getting around), visitor amenities (public restrooms, visitor information, parking), activities, overall appeal, retail mix (lodging, dining, shopping), critical mass, customer service, area attractions, pedestrian friendliness, gathering spaces, evening activities, and the availability of marketing materials and their effectiveness.

The area benefits from tourism when visitors spend money, and they do that in the local gift shops, restaurants, hotels, etc. Therefore, the On-site Assessment includes a candid look at private businesses as much as public spaces and amenities.

For every shortcoming or challenge we note during the assessment process, we provide a low-cost "suggestion," where possible, on how the challenge can be corrected or overcome. The suggestions are not termed "recommendations," as they were developed without consulting the community first about possible constraints, future plans, or reasons why the suggestions may not be appropriate. Hopefully this assessment process will open dialogue within the communities, leading people to adopt some or all of the suggestions, taking them from suggestions to recommendations.

It's important to note that to increase the tourism industry, fulfilling one or two of the suggestions may have little impact, but implementing a number of them, if not all, can have a profoundly successful impact on the area's ability to tap into the tourism industry.

Implementation of these suggestions must be a region-wide effort, involving both privately owned businesses as well as local, county, and state agencies, where appropriate. Every local organization plays a role in tourism, downtown revitalization, or economic development efforts. A Destination Marketing Organization (DMO, CVB, Chamber, TPA, etc.) will not be successful if the tourism effort is not region-wide.

In many cases, issues may come up that you are already aware of and are already working on. In that case, the assessment validates those efforts. But more often than not, the assessment will point out things that you are aware of but can't mention

or bring up without paying a political price. Local politics can be a killer of the tourism industry.

While marketing efforts are important, product development is the most important factor of a successful tourism industry. Visitors want activities, not just things to look at. How much time can a visitor spend enjoying activities - that cater to their interests - in your area? Does your community have truly unique attractions the visitor can't get closer to home? You must be able to deliver on your marketing promises – otherwise visitors might come once, but they won't come back. It's much more cost effective to bring people back, than to always go out and entice new visitors into town. "Been there, done that" communities eventually run out of visitors and find they don't have a sustainable tourism industry, or they simply become pit stops or gateways on the way to somewhere else.

After spending several days reviewing marketing materials and assessing the region, we have looked at all of these issues, and have developed some suggestions and ideas the area can discuss and possibly implement to help increase tourism spending.

SUCCESSFUL TOURISM TRANSLATES TO CASH

Tourism is successful when the community imports more cash than it exports. When residents spend their hard-earned money outside the community, the community is exporting cash – often referred to as "leakage." Tourism helps fill that gap, importing cash into the local economy without the necessity of having to provide extended social and other services. Visitors come, spend money, then go home. When you import more cash than you export, you have a positive "balance of trade." Communities with successful tourism programs easily see that the industry subsidizes the community, whereas other communities find that they subsidize visitors – providing services visitors use without them leaving enough money behind to cover the cost of those services.

The primary goal of the tourism industry is to bring more cash into the local economy. This doesn't happen when visitors come into the community, get out of their cars, and take photographs. And it doesn't happen when visitors go swimming in the lake at your park all day, sunning, and eating the lunch they brought from home. And it doesn't happen when visitors hike down your trails, enjoy your interpretive centers, or stroll through your lovely arboretums. These are all great things to do, and, of course, you do want your visitors to do these – but, you also want to entice them into your shops, your cafes, espresso stands, restaurants, galleries, B&B's, and hotels, ultimately opening their wallets to make purchases. That is what helps your local economy, your small merchants, your hoteliers, and your tax coffers.

To entice visitors to spend money in your community, you need to have places for them to spend it – you need to have the right mix of shops, restaurants, entertainment, and lodging facilities, all in an attractive setting, as well as attractions that make them want to visit you in the first place.

THE THREE TYPES OF TOURISM

1. Visiting friends and family

The number one reason people travel is to visit friends and/or family. If you did nothing to promote tourism, you would still have tourism in your community. However, when friends and family come to visit, do your residents take them out to eat, shop, dine locally? Or do they head to a neighboring community? Do your locals even know what you have to offer? An effective tourism marketing effort also includes educating locals as to what you have and how to find it through effective wayfinding signage, gateways and advertising.

2. Business travel

The second most popular reason for travel is business. Included in this category is educational travel: colleges and universities, as well as conventions and meetings, corporate travel, vendor travel, etc. Like leisure travelers, this group is looking for things to do "after hours" while in the area. The most successful convention and trade show towns are the result of their secondary activities or "diversions," not simply because of their convention and exhibition facilities. Think Disneyworld, Disneyland, San Antonio's River Walk, and Banff, to name a few.

3. Leisure travel

The third, and most lucrative of all types of visitors, is the leisure traveler. They have no personal connections to the community, but are coming purely to enjoy themselves. They stay in commercial lodging establishments, eat virtually all their meals in local restaurants, and their top diversionary activity is shopping and dining in a pedestrian-friendly setting.

The average leisure visitor is active 14 hours a day, yet typically only spends four to six hours with the primary lure. They then spend eight to ten hours with diversionary activities - things they could do closer to home, but will do while in the area. A good example of this is Branson, Missouri, the "live music-theater capital of the world." This town of 6,500 residents hosts 7.5 million visitors a year.

The primary "lure" is the 49 music theaters. The average visitor attends two shows a day over about four hours. During the other hours of the day, the visitor will shop in local outlet malls, head to the water parks, theme parks, and other attractions, play a round of golf, hike, bike, fish, do some bird watching, and participate in any number of other activities they could do closer to home, but will do while visiting Branson.

THE THREE STAGES OF TOURISM

1. Status quo

If you take no action to develop the tourism industry, you will still have an element of tourism, simply because some travelers will pull off local highways or freeways for gas, food, or lodging, as well as the fact that the number one reason for travel is to visit friends or family. If you have residents, you will have some tourism.

2. Getting people to stop

The first priority of developing a successful tourism industry is getting people to stop. Imagine how successful businesses in the community would be if just 50% of the vehicles traveling through pulled off the highway and spent just 30 minutes in your community – buying gas, an ice cream cone, a sandwich, a gift or souvenir?

If there's a strong pull, imagine the money spent if visitors stayed two hours in the community, which nearly always translates to additional spending.

The first goal is to get those travelers to stop.

3. Becoming the destination

To become a destination community you must have attractions and supporting amenities that convince visitors to spend the night. And those attractions must be different from what the visitor can get closer to home.

Overnight visitors spend three times that of day visitors, and nearly ten times that of visitors using your community as a pit stop on the way to somewhere else.

THE FOUR-TIMES RULE

Visitors will make a point of stopping or staying in a community if it has enough activities that appeal specifically to them and will keep them busy four times longer than it took them to get there.

In other words, if a person has to drive 15 minutes to visit you, do you have enough for them to do to keep them busy for an hour? (4 times 15 minutes) If a visitor has to drive an hour, do you have the activities and amenities to keep them busy for four hours?

The more you have to offer, collectively, the further visitors will come, and the longer they will stay, and of course, the more they will spend. This is why it is so important for communities to market more than just their immediate geographic areas. By marketing neighboring activities and attractions, you present much more for a visitor to do, and you make the visit worth the trip.

Visitors don't care about city limits or county lines – so market the broader package and you'll be able to keep people in the area long enough to translate to another meal, some more shopping, and hopefully, an overnight stay.

SELL THE EXPERIENCE, NOT GEOGRAPHY

Nearly every destination marketing organization is charged with promoting a geographic area, yet visitors couldn't care less about those boundaries. They are looking for activities that cater to their interests, and location is second to the experience. ALWAYS promote the primary lure first, then the location. People by the millions head to Disneyland, Disneyworld, Dollywood and other attractions. They are not going to Anaheim, Orlando or Pigeon Forge.

Always sell the activity - the experience - THEN the location.

LURES, DIVERSIONS AND AMBIANCE

Too often communities promote the list of diversions that nearly every community has. The primary lure is the activity that a visitor can't find closer to home.

Always promote your primary lure, then the diversions. Do not try to be all things to all people. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had "something for everyone?" Of course not - you go there because they have something specific for you. Find your niche and promote it like crazy.

Historic downtowns provide ambiance - they are not attractions, diversions, nor are they a primary lure. It's what's in the buildings that makes a downtown a destination.

The same can be said for scenery. Unless your vista is a world-class scene, such as Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon, scenic vistas create wonderful ambiance, but don't translate to spending, and they only last a few minutes. Then what?

All too often communities promote their heritage as a primary draw. How far would you travel to visit a mining museum? A timber museum? An agricultural center? A county historical museum? Heritage must be outstanding and pervasive throughout the community to be a primary lure, such as Plimoth Plantation or Salem, Massachusetts.

Thousands of communities are the "capital" of something. For instance, in California, Borrego Springs is the grapefruit capital of the world. Gilroy is the garlic capital. Modesto is the tomato capital. Gridley is the kiwi capital. Oxnard is the strawberry capital. Fallbrook is the avocado capital. But here's the question: Have you ever gone anywhere because it was the capital of a fruit or vegetable?

Your local heritage is important to the community and can set the ambiance, even becoming a diversionary activity. For local heritage to be a major attraction, it needs to combine activities with ambiance, and it needs to be pervasive throughout the area.

BE DIFFERENT OR THE BEST

Why should a visitor come to your community if they can enjoy the same activities closer to home? Too many communities promote "outdoor recreation" as their primary draw. Unfortunately, that is the same attraction promoted by nearly every community in North America.

If you are different, then you have a reason for travelers to choose to visit you. If you are the best, then visitors will generally flock to your doors.

If you have great hiking trails, then market their unique qualities. Be specific and paint the image

of how wonderful they are in the minds of your potential visitors. If you have one fantastic restaurant in town, let people know about it – a unique dining experience is something many people will travel far to enjoy.

Ashland, Oregon, previously a depressed timber town, began its Shakespeare Festival, which now runs nine months of the year and draws hundreds of thousands of visitors who spend an average of six nights in the community. The Shakespeare Festival made Ashland different from any other community.

Leavenworth, Washington, another dying timber town, adopted a Bavarian architectural theme and produces dozens of Bavarian events every year. Some now say the town looks more genuinely Bavarian than towns in Bavaria. It is now one of the primary tourist destinations in Washington state, hosting more than 2.5 million visitors annually. They offer a different experience, an experience that is pervasive throughout town.

Okanogan County, Washington is an outdoor recreational paradise – just like 37 of the 38 other counties in Washington. So why go to the Okanogan? Because they are the best. They researched guidebooks, newspaper and magazine articles, and pulled quotes they could use in their advertising efforts. Like, "Pinch yourself, you're in Okanogan Country with perhaps the best cross country skiing on the continent." This, and other quotes like it, make it worth the drive to visit Okanogan Country. The third-party endorsements show that they are the best.

Set yourself apart from everyone else, and you'll see that by being unique, you'll be a greater attraction.

CRITICAL MASS MEANS CASH

Although it may not be the primary reason why visitors come to your community, shopping and dining in a pedestrian setting is the number one activity of visitors. Besides lodging, it is also how visitors spend the most amount of money.

Do you have a pedestrian-friendly shopping district? If not, can you create one? Many communities have been highly successful with the development of a two or three block long pedestrian "village" including visitor-oriented retail shops, dining, visitor information, restrooms, etc., all in an attractive, landscaped setting.

The general rule of thumb in those two or three blocks (not spread out all over town) is 10+10+10: Ten destination retail shops, which includes galleries, antiques, collectibles, home accents and furnishings, artists in action, book stores, logo gear (clothing), souvenirs, outfitters, tour operators, activity shops such as kites, jewelry, wine or tobacco shops, and other specialties. The second ten is for food: ice cream, fudge and candy stores, soda fountains, sit-down dining, coffee shops, cafes, bistros, delis, etc. And the final ten are businesses open after 6:00 pm. This includes entertainment: bars, dance clubs, theaters (movies and performing arts), retail shops with activities (piano bar in a wine shop), etc.

The important point is to group these businesses together to create the "critical mass" in a pedestrian-friendly setting. This will attract visitors as well as locals, and make it worth their while to stop and shop. People are always drawn to the critical mass –

the opportunity to have multiple choices, multiple experiences, all in a convenient and attractive setting.

TOURISM IS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The goal of successful tourism is for people to come into the community, spend money, and go home. Tourism is nearly a $650 billion dollar industry in the U.S., nearly $75 billion in Canada, and supports millions of jobs. Ninety percent of tourism industry businesses are small businesses, of which 90% have less then 15 employees. Tourism provides the opportunity for entrepreneurs to get started, for small family-run businesses to thrive, and for artisans and craftspeople to find a market. It creates the basis for a unique niche-retail environment including wineries, artists, crafts, etc. Tourism provides a diverse market within the community, expanding its potential. Enhancing the community through beautification efforts creates an attractive setting for both locals and visitors, key in revitalizing a community's downtown. And a tourism-friendly town will attract non-tourism industries faster than others – new businesses will see the community as a visitor before they make a final determination about the community. Tourism is the front door to your other economic development efforts.

The benefits of a healthy tourism industry can rejuvenate a town, foster community pride, encourage economic diversity, and lead the way to a vital, successful community.

NEXT STEPS

The findings and suggestions in this report will provide many ideas, strategies, and goals to reach for. We hope that it fosters dialogue and becomes a springboard for the region in enhancing the tourism industry and other economic development efforts, leading to greater prosperity, rejuvenation, and enjoyment by all the citizens.

This report offers a first step in reaching that goal. To fully realize the benefits of this assessment, the communities should take these findings and suggestions, discuss them and evaluate them, and develop a plan for implementation.

A detailed branding plan would help to build on the results of this assessment, adding in-depth research, evaluation, and local input to develop a unique brand and implementation program. The assessment process essentially provides a look at where you are today. RBI's BrandCamp program helps build your branding plan from the ground up - with local input, brainstorming, research, and creative planning. We can work with you to guide you through the process, helping create a plan that has local champions and community buy-in.

The next step in the planning process would be to provide public outreach and review past and current planning efforts. This would help determine your goals as a region.

The third step would involve research, feasibility and market analysis, and determining your brand - what you are or hope to be known for.

Then comes the "development" portion of the plan or the "how to get there" program: determining what product development initiatives need to be undertaken to reinforce and grow the brand. This also includes defining the roles of the various local organizations. Brand-building takes a village - everyone pulling in the same direction, each with their own "to do list."

Finally, there's the detailed marketing plan: how and when you will tell the world who you are and what makes you special - the place to live, work and play.

The branding plan should be an "action plan" as opposed to a "strategic plan." You want a to do list, by organization, not just general strategies, goals and objectives.

The recommendations should provide all the necessary steps for you to be successful in attaining your goals of a more diverse economy with an enhanced tourism industry and to become more attractive and enjoyable for both visitors and citizens.

A good plan will provide a program to get local residents and the business community pulling together, building the area's unique image in the minds of visitors and residents alike. The result of your efforts will be a prosperous, enjoyable environment in which to live, work, and visit.

Findings & Suggestions

The primary goal of tourism development is to increase the amount of cash that is "imported" into the community. Fortunately, many of the same ingredients that make a destination attractive to visitors also make the community attractive to residents and new business development - and investment - making it a better place to live, work, and play.

This is not just about tourism, but tourism is the front door to your non-tourism economic development efforts. During this assessment, we examined 60 key elements about Bellingham and its neighboring communities.

A little background - I grew up on San Juan Island, and started my career in tourism by helping develop Whistler Resort. I spent a lot of time traveling along I-5, passing through Bellingham and Whatcom County, but I never stopped to visit except to see friends and family. I think very few people in the Seattle area realize all that Whatcom County has to offer as a destination.

Whatcom County is an incredibly beautiful area, and we found that there are many places that are great destinations for visitors, as well as being wonderful places to live and do business.

Whatcom County is beautiful, but we found a number of challenges:

• Challenge #1 - You have so much to offer, and you market everything, including lakes, rivers, scenic drives, outdoor recreation, trails, wineries, shopping, marinas, nice towns, ferries, the arts, history, fishing, golf, casinos, events, Salish Sea, mountains, beaches, Native American influence, farmers markets, spas, and more. The problem with this is that nearly every place in western Washington can promote most of these as well. You cannot win by trying to be all things to all people. You don't stand out from the crowd.

• Challenge #2 - You need to shift your marketing away from promoting ASSETS to promoting ACTIVITIES that are worth a two-hour drive and an overnight stay.

• Challenge #3 - You rely too heavily on Canadian visitors.

• Challenge #4 - No one says "Let's check out Whatcom County."

• Challenge #5 - The most successful destinations are built on private sector investment, not public sector assets and amenities.

We started out by trying to find things from the highways and freeways. Suggestion #1: Work with DOT on freeway signage to make sure people know which exits to take.

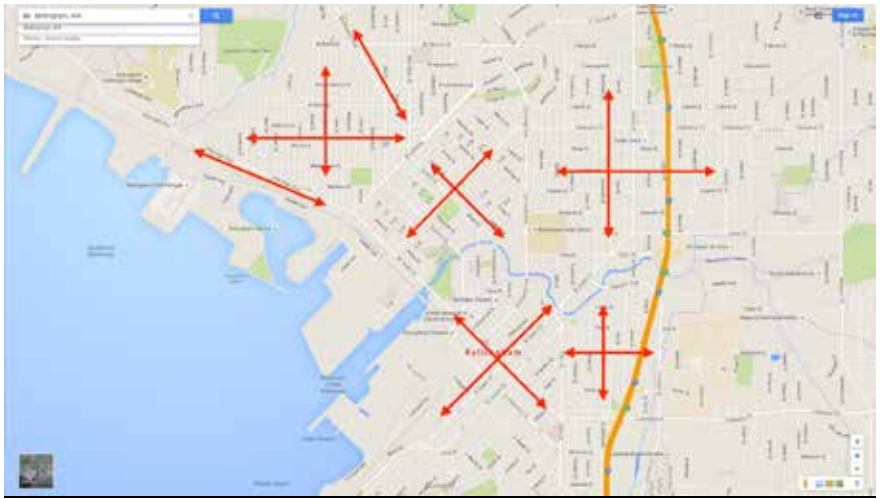
Suggestion #2: Your top priority should be to develop a county-wide wayfinding system.

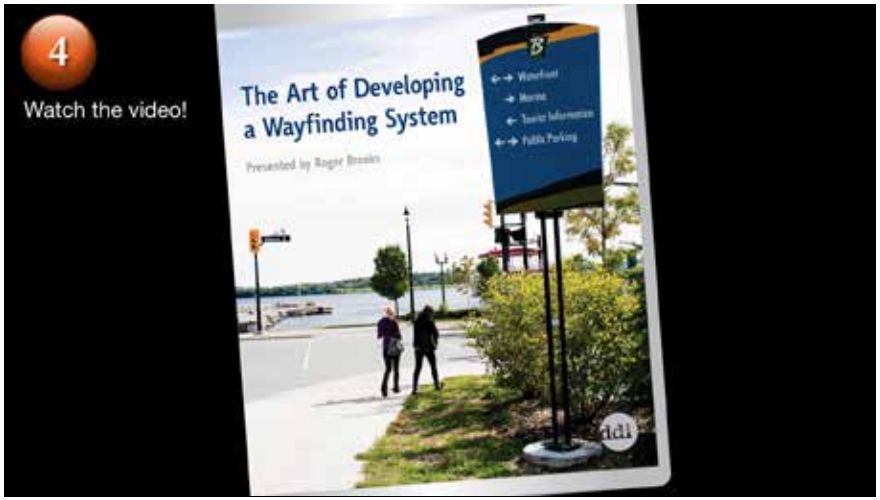
A wayfinding system includes:
- Gateways & entries into the communities
- Attractions & activities
- Amenities (parking, restrooms, visitor information)
- Trail markets and access points
- Visitor information kiosks
- Pedestrian wayfinding (downtowns)

Wayfinding signs should have no more than five items on a sign. They should always be decorative and work with the community's brand.

Note this wayfinding sign in Pittsburg, California (top left). It is decorative, easy to read, and fits the community's brand. This sign in The Woodlands, Texas (top right) fits the community's ambiance as well.

We were happy to see Fairhaven's wayfinding signs (bottom left). It is also important that wayfinding signage "connect the dots" all the way to the end. We never could find the "outdoor sculpture" mentioned on this sign (bottom right).





Always make signage easy to read and avoid condensed text or script lettering. Wayfinding signage should be easy to read and follow. Almost every destination identified on signs on I-5 were lost once you leave the freeway. The follow-through directional signage was not continued to the destination. There was no signage on I-5 southbound for visitor information.

We have an entire video on wayfinding systems in our video library, and we recommend you watch it for more helpful information (bottom left).

A good wayfinding system will educate residents and visitors about what assets Whatcom County has. It will increase local spending, overnight stays, and tourism revenues. I-5 alone sees more than 25 million people a year driving right through your communities. The lack of a good wayfinding system means you are barely monetizing this terrific asset's potential. It is very difficult to find anything in Whatcom County because of the lack of wayfinding. Bellingham isn't on any type of grid system (top right), making it even more difficult.

Work with the state, county, and every city to create a task force. Collectively apply for federal transportation grants for design and implementation of a wayfinding system; develop a pro-rata share to divide the costs appropriately.

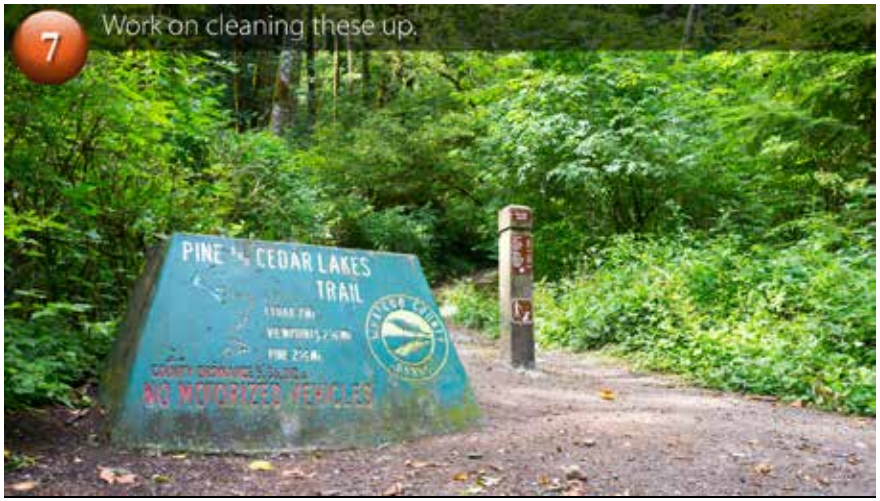
I thought I was on Chuckanut Drive (bottom right) here, but it turned out this wasn't it.

Add visitor information to several areas around the county. Small, unmanned kiosks are excellent for this purpose.

This small kiosk in Moses Lake, Washington, (top right) provides information about not-to-be-missed attractions in the area. It was created by volunteers.

This visitor information kiosk (bottom left and right) is a great example of a kiosk that fits the ambiance of the town. This includes brochure distribution (bottom right), and each business or attraction that displays their brochure pays $5 each month, which covers the cost of restocking, maintenance, and a little more to go for building another kiosk.

Place visitor information kiosks all around the county - make it easy for your visitors to learn what you have to offer and to cross-sell other attractions and amenities in the area. The more you have to offer, the longer people will stay, and the more money they will spend.

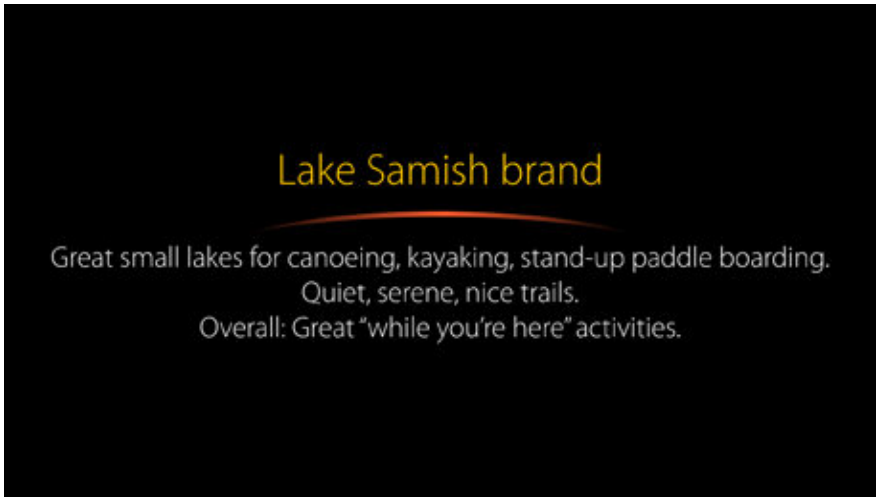


For more information, watch our video about visitor information centers in our online library (top left).

Make sure to maintain your signage, so that it is clean, easy to read, and attractive. These signs (top right) could use some clean-up.

Trail signage is important to encourage visitors (and residents) to use these attractions. By providing trail markers and information including distance, level of difficulty, any amenities, etc., you make it easier for people to plan a trip and enjoy the parks and trails.

We thought we were on Chuckanut Drive, but it turns out we were going beside Lake Samish, and we found some great places. As we drove around Lake Samish, we saw the park (bottom right). This is a beautiful spot, and it's a great place for boating and paddle boarding. This should definitely be marketed specifically.



Lake Samish is a beautiful spot for relaxing outdoor recreational activities, such as canoeing and hiking easy, scenic trails. Consider promoting it by the season, and by the specific activities for each season.

It's important to have visitor information accessible for people when they're done with hiking the trails and enjoying the great lakes in the area. Make it easy for your visitors, provide more than just park information - provide brochures to cross-sell activities, shops, and dining.

Since what I thought was Chuckanut Drive was actually Samish, I went out the next day to find the REAL Chuckanut Drive. My friend told me Highway 11 is Chuckanut! Add Chuckanut Drive to the sign (bottom right). Make it easy for visitors!

Fairhaven Park's entry looks like it used to be stunning (top left), but it's been allowed to deteriorate. Be sure to keep your entries looking fresh and updated. People judge the book by the cover, and a tired entry gives the impression that the park is run down.

We came across the Chuckanut Bay Gallery (top right), and it's a great shop. Be sure to promote your "anchor tenants" specifically. Your "anchor tenants" are your very best businesses or attractions that people would go out of their way specifically to visit. You need to promote them.

No shopping mall is successful without anchor tenants. The other businesses benefit by being in close proximity to the anchor tenants. One example is Disney World in Orlando. There are lots of other attractions in Orlando, but most people visit to go to the anchor, Disney World, and they see the other attractions while there. Anchor tenants are just as important for towns. People come for the anchors, and other businesses all benefit.

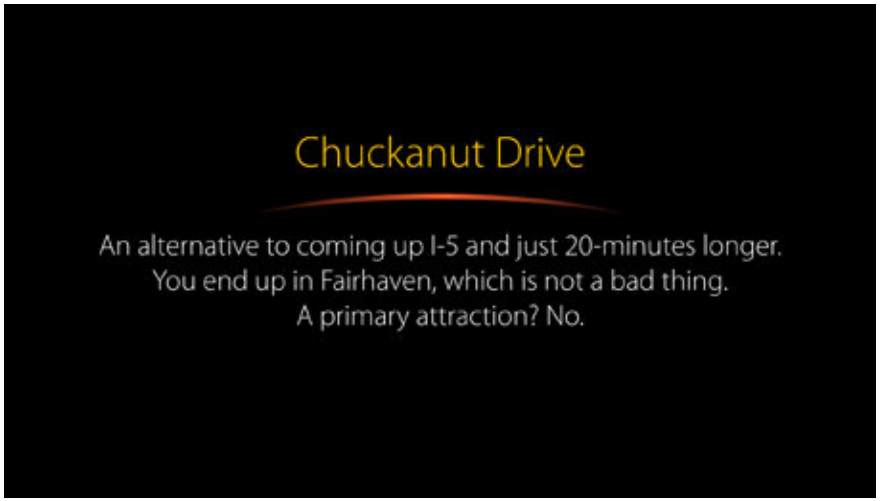
Promote your anchor tenants with a "Best Of" guide. It can have a dramatic impact on visitor spending. This sample from Alpena, MI (bottom right) is a great example.

We came across Larrabee State Park, and it is very nice. Is the stage ever used for performances? (top left) If so, add a readerboard to invite people back by showing them the upcoming attractions. Even if it's only used once a year, let people know about it!

Of course parks have rules, but be sure to welcome visitors before hitting them with all the rules and cautions (top right).

Here is a wasted opportunity to cross-promote the area (bottom left). Stock these brochure holders with information for Fairhaven, Bellingham, and other areas in Whatcom County.

It's great that you have a park store and sell logo gear (bottom right). In addition to letting us know that you have the store, be sure to tell visitors where it is. We couldn't find it!



Chuckanut Drive is a lovely scenic byway, and it's a pleasant alternative route from the Skagit Valley to Bellingham, rather than I-5, although much slower. Promoting it as an alternative, scenic route is fine, but it isn't a primary attraction. Scenic views are not commonly seen from Chuckanut Drive in Whatcom County - they are more easily seen from Skagit County.

Arriving in Fairhaven, we were charmed. Fairhaven is a gem of a village. They are doing a good job of being a fun place to shop and dine in an attractive, historic setting. Keep in mind that historic downtowns aren't a draw because of their history, but because of the things to do. The history is the setting, and people are looking for activities - the historic setting adds to the appeal, but if there weren't great shops and restaurants - if there were just empty historic buildings - visitors and residents wouldn't want to spend their time there. But Fairhaven is doing a good job providing both a great setting as well as the activities that people want.

Tony's (bottom right) is a great gathering place. We loved the availability of outdoor dining, the beautification, and the artistic flare of the community.

We thought Fairhaven would make a great place for a girls' day out (or a girls' weekend out). It is one of the best art towns we've seen, and it's definitely worth a drive from Seattle.

There are so many fun things to see, shops to check out, restaurants to try. We came back the next day, and there was a farmers market being held in the village green - we hadn't known about it beforehand. Suggest you keep a sign posted at the village green to let people know about it - not just on the day it's being held, but all the time, so people will be invited back.

If any other activities are held there, be sure to have signage to let people know about them as well.

We saw the sign for the Steampunk Festival (top left) and the Where's Waldo Party. These are great, and they should be widely promoted. They sound like they would be worth a drive from Seattle!

We stumbled across these old stones in the grass (bottom left and right). They are fun! They've obviously been neglected over the years, and we suggest you bring them back - turn them into a diversionary activity. We were told that not all of them are accurate, and that's okay. Promote them as legends. This would give visitors another activity to keep them in town longer. The first goal is to get visitors to stop. If you can keep visitors in town for two hours, spending doubles.

Find your hidden gems - you can promote them in your "Best Of" brochure. They aren't necessarily things people would travel an hour for, but they can be fun little gems that add to the experience.

While Fairhaven has a lot going for it, there are a few improvements that could be made.

Add more beautification. This pot (top left) is pretty, but imagine what the street would look like if there were ten pots and several benches along the sidewalk? It would invite people to continue down the street to check out all the shops. People love to spend time in beautiful places.

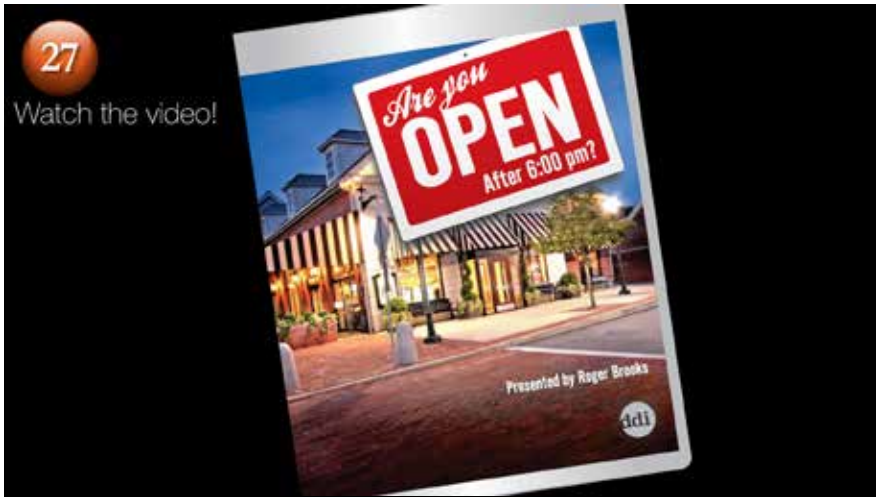
Beautification can be more than pots of flowers and benches. Note how these merchants in Canmore (bottom left) put out attractive displays of their merchandise to entice customers into their shops. Bring window displays outside. But an attractive display of merchandise is very different from racks of clothes (top right) or tables filled with piles of merchandise. Avoid the garage sale look.

Suggestion #22: Add a readerboard at the Village Green (bottom right) to let people know what events are coming up. Invite people back!

This is a perfect place for a visitor information kiosk (top left). One of our favorite kiosks is this one in Cape May, New Jersey (top right). At the top, it has text that reads, "Welcome friends, old & new, linger here a day or two." It provides lots of space for brochure distribution.

When visitors are traveling, they still want to use brochures - electronic kiosks are not nearly as helpful for visitors. There's nothing for them to take with them. Bentley University's Center for Marketing Technology performed a study of travelers' use of different types of information. They found that prior to traveling, only 32% of travel decisions are made using brochures (#1 is the internet; #2 is recommendations from friends and family). But during travel, 81% of decisions are made using printed brochures. Make sure to have them available for visitors!

Consider painting utility boxes (bottom left), so they become decorative works of art, such as these (bottom right) in Edmonton, Alberta.



Suggestion: Move the newspaper boxes to the Village Green (top left). It's difficult to keep the area under them clean, so it would be great to move them to a different location.

This shop closes at 5:30 Monday through Saturday, and at 5:00 on Sundays (top right). The problem? Seventy percent of ALL consumer retail spending takes place after 6:00 p.m. If shops close before that, they are missing out on that spending.

You will never find a shopping mall closed before 6:00 - they are usually open until at least 9:00. When people are at work all day, when can they go out shopping? In the evenings! Your visitors are out all day hiking, boating, and enjoying recreational activities, and when they are done for the day, they want to enjoy a nice dinner and spend some leisure time shopping.

We are moving to the European standard - where we dine and shop later in the evening hours. Watch our video (bottom right), which can give you great ideas for how smaller merchants can stay open later.

Here are seven facts about downtowns:

#1 Downtowns = visitor spending. The top activity of visitors is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly, intimate setting This is where 80% of all non-lodging tourism spending takes place. That's why Disney has built Downtown Disney (top left) outside its theme parks.

And 70% of ALL retail spending takes place after 6:00 pm. Are you open?

#2 Tourism IS economic development. Tourism is the front door to non-tourism economic development. Someone thinking of moving their business to your downtown (top right) comes as a visitor first. Downtown organizations and tourism should be joined at the hip. Downtown is the litmus test for the health of the community.

#3 Downtowns are critical to your success. The heart and soul of any community (besides its people) is its downtown. If locals don't hang out in your downtown, neither will visitors. Help attract people downtown by bringing it to life (bottom left).

#4 Downtowns are back! People want downtowns more than ever. Even Walmart is trying to take advantage of that fact (bottom right).

Here's why downtowns are so important:

This is the age of third places. The first place is where you live (top left). The second place is where you work (top right). The third place is where you hang out (bottom left). And people are less and less likely to hang out in a mall. The last suburban mall was built 24 years ago. People want a downtown setting.

We are slowly moving to the European standard. We're eating dinner later, we're shopping later at night, and we're looking for things to do after work and on weekends. People want to have those "third places" to gather together in their leisure hours, relaxing, dining, shopping, and spending time together.

Create gathering places with music, street artisans and vendors.

Starbucks (top left) built a whole brand on providing "third places" for their customers - becoming the place people will spend time with friends.

Downtown Fact #5 The future of downtowns is to be the place we go after work and on weekends. We want places that are open and lively after work: cafe dining (top right), shopping (bottom left).

You have two downtowns that are third places: Bellingham and Fairhaven - except most of Fairhaven's shops close before 6:00 pm.

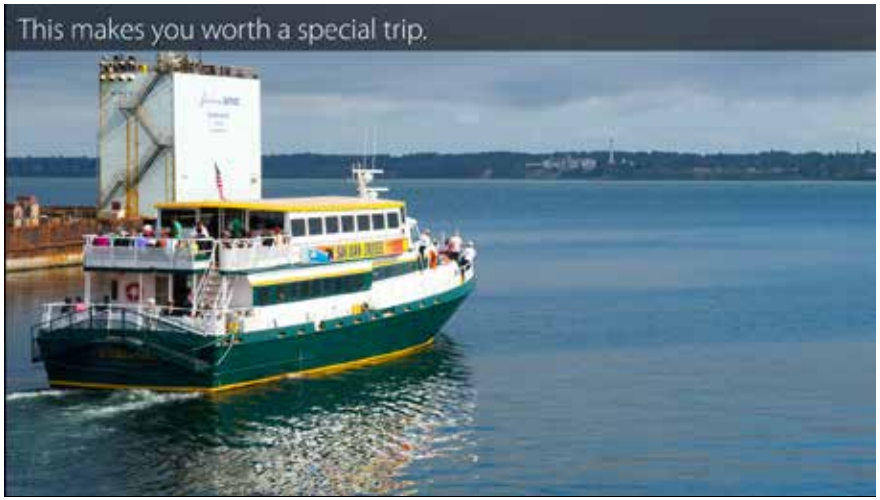
Most cities in Europe are built around plazas (bottom right), like this piazza in Sienna, Italy. They aren't just empty space or grassy parks - they are filled with restaurants, shopping, and entertainment. People gather in the plazas and spend time there, socializing, dining, shopping, and being together in a community atmosphere.

This piazza in Florence, Italy (top left) was filled with great entertainment, like this singer and her accompanist. The Santa Monica Third Street Promenade (top right) used to be a "dead zone," but it's been revitalized and is now one of the busiest downtown blocks in California. It's filled with street entertainers, dining, and shopping.

#6 In economic development, tourism, and community development, there is NOTHING that's more important than your downtown.

#7 The business mix rules. We looked at 2,000 cities and towns, and surveyed 400 of the most successful downtowns and downtown districts in the U.S. and Canada to discover the 20 most common ingredients for their success. One big mistake many towns make is thinking that beautifying the streetscapes and facade improvements will "fix" an ailing downtown. It's what's IN the buildings that makes a downtown successful. Beautification is only half the equation. Business mix is equally important.

Back to Fairhaven - We found this little trail (bottom right), but without any signage we didn't know where it went.



There seems to be a zone between downtown Fairhaven and the waterfront that is neglected (top left). Try a little landscape maintenance to make it more appealing.

There is a little coffee shop down by the water that is really cute, but being so removed from downtown, we weren't sure if they got enough business. Making the transition area between downtown and the water might help that.

The terminal looked very nice (top right), but inside was dark and echoey (bottom left). Consider filling it with art and activity.

Cruises like these (bottom right) are the types of things that people will drive from Seattle to experience. They're great. And after the cruise? People want to go into your shops, your galleries, your restaurants, and spend money.

These are the types of things to promote - activities - rather than just "things" like lakes, trails and waterfront. People want activities.

Activities make you worth a special trip.

Fairhaven has some real hidden assets, like this beautiful little abbey garden cafe (top right). People would have a hard time finding it without wayfinding. It should be promoted in your "Best Of" guide.

This building (bottom left) is also stunning, and it should be promoted.

My local friend asked me if I'd seen the boardwalk in Fairhaven. I hadn't, and had no idea there was one. It turns out that behind this pole (bottom right), there is a little sign that points you to the boardwalk.

This sign to the boardwalk (top left) needs to be much larger, and the boardwalk needs to be promoted. It is important. I understand it connects all the way to Bellingham - that's awesome! (top right)

Fairhaven has a lot of great attractions, and it could use its very own "Best Of Fairhaven" brochure. This brochure needs to promote specific businesses and attractions, and the selection of those should be based upon certain criteria:

- Must be highly regarded (80%+ positive peer reviews, regional publications)
- Must have good curb appeal
- Must be open year-round
- Must be open until at least 6:00 pm and be open six days a week
- Must be unique to your town (no chains)

We made an initial list of businesses we thought would fit the bill - but we didn't have a chance to see everything, so this list should be refined. These businesses should be invited to participate in your brochure, and they would pay a fee for their panel (perhaps $400).

Consider changing the name of the Interurban Trail. That's a boring name with little appeal.
But Fairhaven Village is awesome, and it's worth the drive from Seattle.

We drove on to check out Ferndale. All the times I've driven on I-5, I've never thought Ferndale had a real downtown. Seeing the sign on the freeway (top left), I see that there is visitor information and historic attractions, so I take the exit.

Unfortunately, when I reach the light after the exit (top right), there are no signs directing me to Ferndale, the attractions, or visitor information. Add directional signage so that people know which way to turn!

I turned left (bottom left), but there wasn't much.

So I went back and crossed the freeway (bottom right). There were some big box stores, but I still didn't know if this was all there was to Ferndale, or if there was more to the town.

Add signage "Downtown ahead 1/2 mile."

I drove on further, and then I saw the sign (top left) for visitor information, historic attractions, and lakes. I kept on going, and finally saw the Ferndale sign (top right), promoting a new chamber of commerce member. It's unusual for a city gateway sign to be promoting an organization - it would be better to use the readerboard to welcome visitors or announce an upcoming event.

I finally arrived in downtown Ferndale (bottom left and right) and it looks great. Right away I noticed the hanging baskets, decorative streetlights, mural, and beautification.

Add some more pots, planters, and benches (bottom right). Benches should always be placed against the building facades facing towards the sidewalk, and they should be flanked with pots.

Soften the transition between the buildings and the sidewalks by adding more beautification. The merchant on the very end of this block is doing a good job, but not many merchants are making an effort. The city is doing its part with the hanging baskets, and the merchants need to help too. Make beautification a top priority for downtown. Seventy percent of first time sales at retail shops, wineries, restaurants and golf courses can come from curb appeal. Beautification is an investment with tremendous returns.

Take a look at this autumn display at a shop in Jonesborough, TN (bottom left).

Doesn't it make you want to go in?

This gift shop along the Blue Ridge Parkway (bottom right) is decorated for the holidays with silk flowers. It doesn't have to be warm weather for beautification to be effective.

Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia

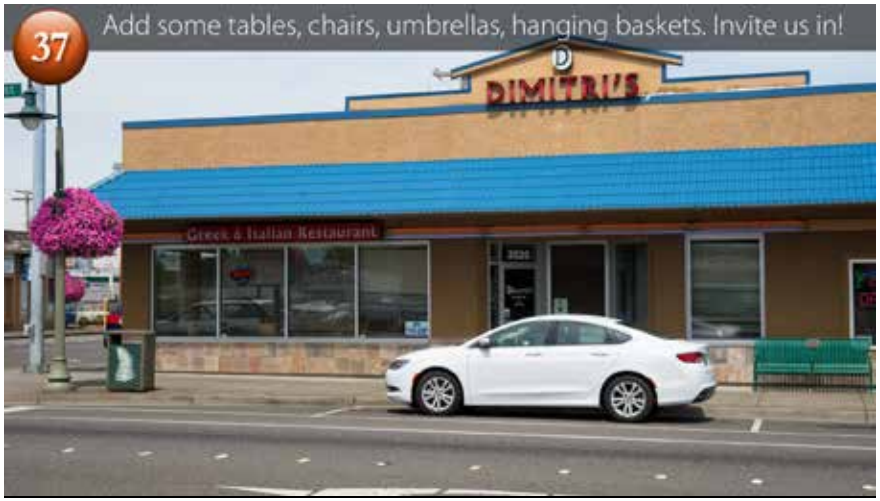
Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia

Neenah, Wisconsin

One of our favorite towns is Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia (top left and right). A major reason it is a favorite is that it is so attractive - brightly painted buildings, flowers and landscaping everywhere, beautiful decorative signage, and a large variety of specialty shops. The merchants do their best to keep the sidewalks clean and their storefronts inviting and beautiful. People like to spend time in beautiful places.

This restaurant in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia (top right) has window boxes and planters full of flowers, and they even make their menu board decorative to entice customers inside.

Neenah, Wisconsin did a downtown makeover (before: bottom left, and after: bottom right). Retail sales in the block with the beautification increased by one-third of the non-beautified street.



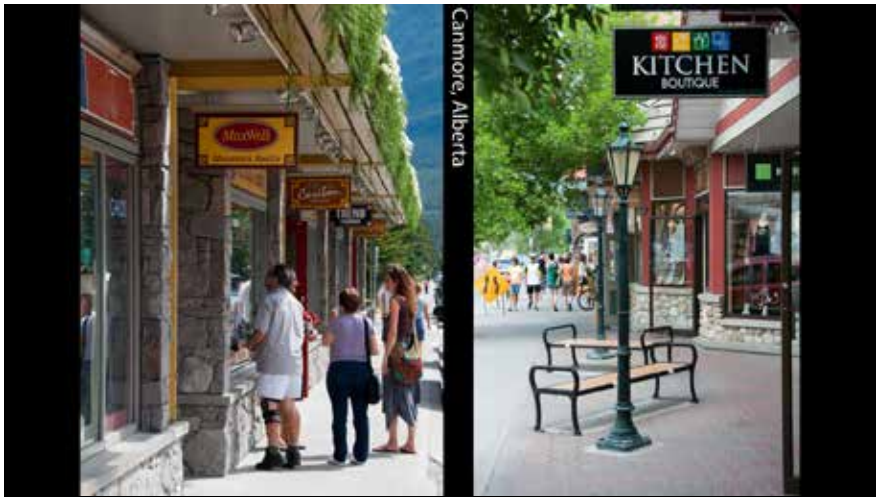
Curb appeal makes restaurants and shops inviting. Have you ever said, "That looks like a good place the eat"? We like to eat at places that have good curb appeal.

This restaurant (top left) would look much more inviting with outdoor cafe tables, chairs, and umbrellas, as well as some pots. If Ferndale doesn't allow outdoor dining, then change the ordinance. Ordinances like that can kill a downtown.

Likewise, this restaurant (top right) needs more beautification to make it more inviting.

The retail signage for all these shops (bottom left) can only be read by someone standing across the street. That's not very helpful. Blade signs (perpendicular signs) should be a top priority.

Carmel, California



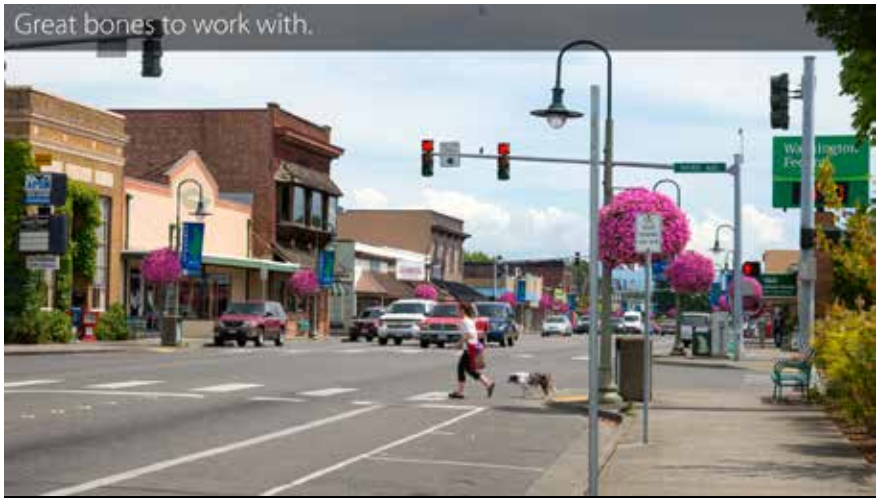
Canmore, Alberta

Blade signs make it easy for potential customers to see what shops you have and where they are. When people travel down a road, either walking or driving, they are looking directly in front. Blade signs are easy to read. Signs placed flat on the building are hidden from view, unless the driver turns his head from side to side to try to read them as he's driving.

Nearly all successful downtowns have blade signs.

These signs in Leavenworth, WA (top left) are excellent examples of effective blade signs. Nantucket, Massachusetts (top right) also uses very good blade signs.

Other examples include Carmel, CA (bottom left) and Canmore, Alberta (bottom right). Blade signs should be a consistent height and size, they should be decorative, and they should promote the primary lure before the name of the business.



Downtown retail signs should follow these guidelines:
- Lettering should be one inch tall for every twelve feet of viewing distance.
- Script lettering should always be avoided.
- The signage should be decorative to enhance the ambiance of the city. Real signs, no billboards or painted plywood signs.
- Retailers and attractions should promote the primary lure first, then the business name.
- Blade signs should be a consistent height and size.
- Keep verbiage to four words - no more than six words.

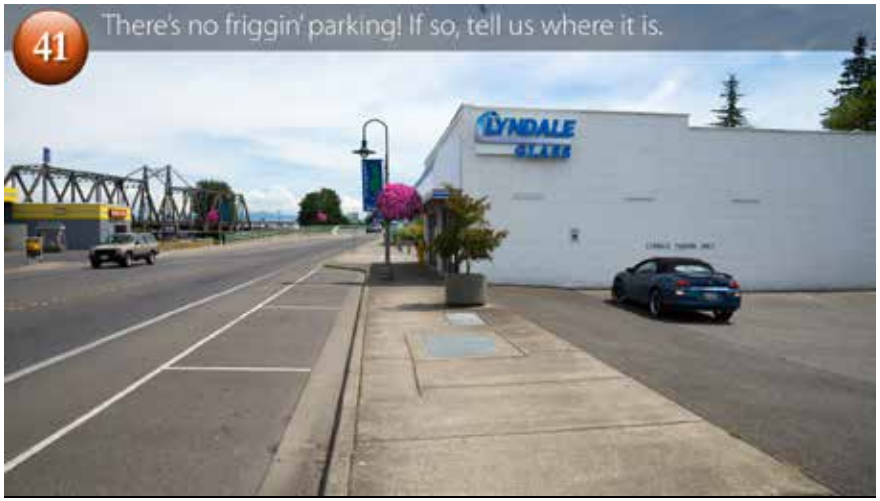
Ferndale is a very attractive town with a lot of potential to be even better.

We saw the great plaza (bottom left) with a beautiful fountain and a lot of appeal. There were restrooms there, which is awesome (bottom right).

Suggestion: Add some visitor information at the restrooms.

Provide information visitors can take with them. Even something as simple as this weather-proof brochure holder in North Platte, Nebraska, (top right and bottom left). It gives visitors an opportunity to take a brochure, and it was inexpensive to construct - about $300. These could be mounted on several buildings throughout town or throughout the county. The lid lifts, and it can hold a couple large brochures and a smaller one.

I saw this great poster (bottom right). Perfect!



We came across this great plaza area next to the river, but we never saw anyone using it (top left).

I wanted to take a closer look, so I tried to find parking. There isn't a parking lot for the park, so I parked in this store lot (top right), planning to just be there for a few minutes. Someone came out of the store and asked me not to park there, so I moved to another store's lot.

The town has this great amenity, but hasn't provided any place for people to park to use the amenity! If there is parking, put up a sign directing people to its location. If there isn't any, explore the possibility of creating some.

We drove out further west of Ferndale, but there were no signs for anything, so we turned around and came back (bottom left). We saw the nice gateway sign and entrance into town from the west - good job! It's very nice.

We saw the saloons and western-feel of the town, and it was fun. Ferndale could focus its brand on western-style pioneer spirit - it would fit!

Ferndale's Old Settlers Picnic has done a great job marketing (top left). We saw plenty of promotion for the picnic as well as the fair.

We wanted to head out to Birch Bay, so we went back to I-5 to find our way. There's good signage from the freeway (top right), and we found there was good wayfinding along the route (bottom left). Telling the number of miles to a destination is very helpful - add miles to other signs as well.

This sign (bottom right) is beginning to get covered with overgrowth - clear it out so the sign stays readable.

Arrived at the state park at Birch Bay, saw the signs with all the rules (top left). Suggest adding a "Welcome" message first, plus adding visitor information. Of course it's important to post the rules, but don't forget about welcoming your visitors and giving them more information about the area to cross-promote. The benefit of tourism doesn't come from visitors at the parks - it comes from those visitors spending money at your restaurants, shops, lodging, and entertainment facilities. So be sure to promote them through good visitor information.

We saw the signs for the "Discovery Pass" (top right). There was never an explanation telling what it was or where to buy them - just that they are required. What is it? Give more information so that visitors know what they need to do to comply.

Birch Bay is a great beach town (bottom left). There was a nice visitor information center (bottom right) in a good setting.

Birch Bay has become a fun town, with some quaint hidden gems and some quirky, fun things to do. We thought it was awesome. It's improved since the last time I visited long ago, and I was very happy to see it.

The "signature" retail shop was packed (top left) - yellow pulls the eye faster than any other color. That goes for brochures, advertising, and buildings!

The lodging looked very nice, and they did a good job with beautification.

This restaurant (top right), with its outdoor dining, looks wonderful.

There were a lot of plastic banners being used by retailers - try to put a limit on plastic banner use. They should only be used for short periods of time for special occasions.

Be sure to promote the activities. People come to experience special activities - not just the beach. So promote "fat tire biking on the beach." Promote the "motor-trike riding on the beach." There are so many things people want to do while there - if you capture their imaginations by helping them visualize what they will enjoy doing, they are more likely to want to visit.

The waterslide (top right) looks fantastic, and a lot of people will come just for that. This should be promoted.

What a great place to visit - Birch Bay has cottages, hotels, condos - lots of excellent lodging facilities. It makes it easy for all types of people to find the right place to stay.

The fastest growing trend in travel is multi-generational travel. Baby boomers want to travel with their kids and grandkids. 34,000,000 Americans and Canadians took at least three multi-generational travel trips in the last year.

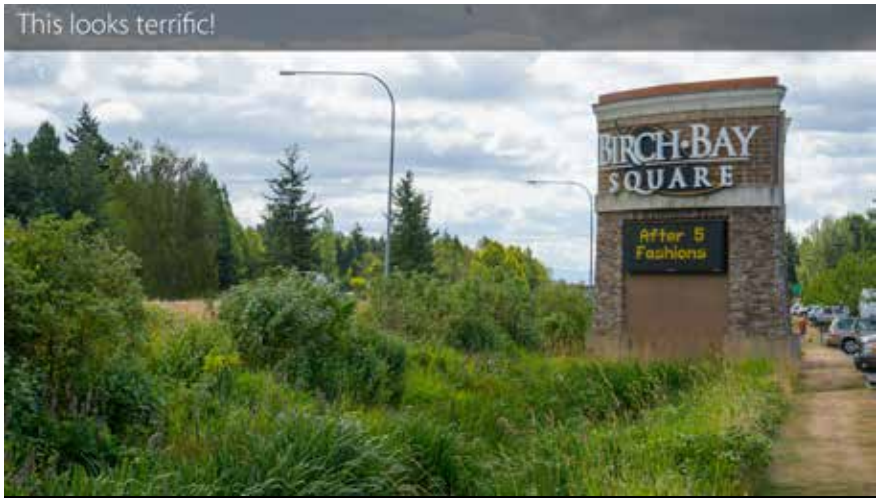
Forbes reports that multi-generational family travel tops the list of travel trends. Rounding out the list are river cruising, active or adventure trips, safaris, distant family connections, and celebration travel. Travel agencies are now tailoring tourism to the needs of families traveling with younger and older relatives.

Why should Whatcom County focus on multi-generational travel? No traveling "unit" spends more and stays longer than multi-generational travelers. And no group spreads the word faster and further via social media and word of mouth.

Birch Bay, with its wealth of fun activities and lodging options, is a perfect destination for multi-generational travel.

We started heading toward Lummi Island, and we saw the Silver Reef Casino! (bottom left and right) I had no idea this was out here. Add signage to make sure people are aware of it and can find it.

The casino is about four miles from I-5. For someone who's never driven there before, four miles seems like twenty. So add "reminder" signs along the way. Let people know the distance so they don't give up and think they've missed it. "Silver Reef Casino - Great Steaks! - Only two miles left to go!"



Birch Bay Square looks very nice. There are a lot of vacancies, and I hope it will end up doing well. I was told that the summer visitor spending was down because of the Canadian exchange rate. With the volatility of the exchange rate, it's best to not rely on Canadian traffic for survival. Focus on appealing to more of the local and Puget Sound markets.

This market is great (top right). Perhaps find your focus as the provisioning headquarters for the Birch Bay visitors?

Can you read this billboard? (bottom left) It's almost impossible to read even the top.

This billboard has 40 words (bottom right). There is no way anyone can read that many words when they are driving 70 mph on the freeway. We have four seconds to read a sign. When people can't read it, they will just ignore it. Billboards cannot be designed as print ads - they just don't work.

Outlined text doesn't work well on signage (top right) because it makes it more difficult to read. In this case, the colors are too close in hue to the brick background, and the sign just doesn't stand out.

This sign has more than 30 words (bottom left), so it would be impossible to read while driving.

I was looking forward to shopping here (bottom right), but it wasn't open, even though this was during business hours. There wasn't a sign to tell me when it would be open, so I didn't know when to come back, or if it was closed permanently.

We saw the sign for the Lummi Nation, next right turn (top left). We didn't know if there was anything there for visitors. Are there activities? Shopping? Dining? Any reason to go there?

Then we also saw the Lummi Island sign (top right). We weren't sure how far to the ferry terminal, or how often the ferries ran. So we decided not to go. With so many unknowns, it wasn't worth taking the chance.

If Lummi Island businesses would like visitors to the island, promote the activities and provide enough information for visitors to make an informed decision.

Driving along I-5, heading toward Lynden, the exit was clearly marked, easy to follow (bottom left). So we continued driving along the Guide Meridian, for miles and miles of traffic circles (bottom right). They sure make the drive longer, and it feels like forever. We were starting to wonder if we'd gone too far or taken the wrong road.

The first "reminder" sign we saw was when we were only three miles from Lynden (top left). Since Lynden is such a long drive, place "reminder" signs along the routes, like "Lynden - 15 miles" or "Lynden - 10 miles."

We spotted Bellewood Acres, and we weren't sure what it was (bottom left). It looked very nice, so we wanted to check it out. It was difficult to read everything on the sign as we were driving past, but we did see the beautiful landscaping and the cafe sign.

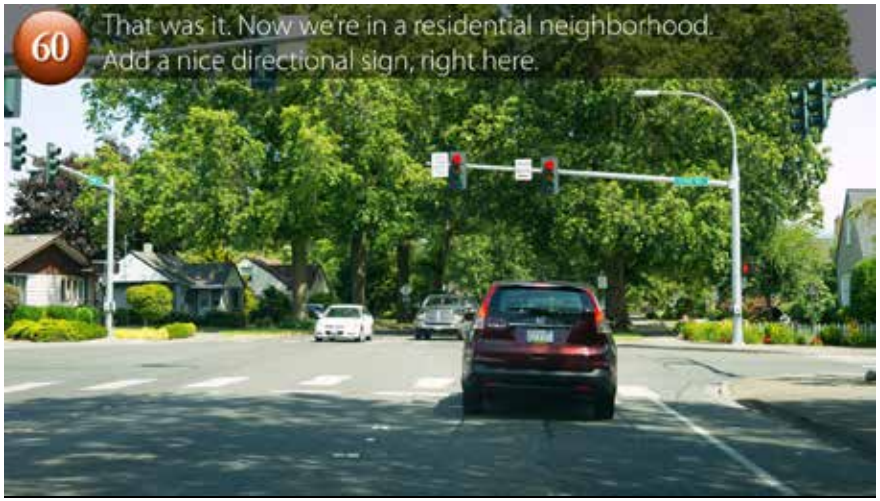
The shop is gorgeous, and we saw that in addition to the shop and cafe, there is a distillery. What a gem! This is a must-visit. Just look at the decor to entice you inside (bottom right). Excellent.

Since the Bellewood Acres sign is difficult to read going so quickly along the highway, we suggest some changes (top left). Instead of so much "busyness" - with essentially four signs, put the messaging all on one sign. Don't use plastic banners. All you have to say on the sign is: Home accents and gifts - Farm to table care - Distillery & local wines - Bellewood Acres. Always promote what you're selling before the name of the store.

We also suggest you create a "Best of Lynden" brochure, and Bellewood Acres should be included.

We got together with some friends who drove up from Lynnwood, and they commented, "Did you see that really creepy place on the way here?" They were talking about this place (top right). It might be a great place, but its appearance made it look creepy to our friends. We tend to "judge the book by its cover" so it's important to create a good first impression.

We finally reached Lynden's gateway sign (bottom left), and it looks beautiful. Since the town of Lynden is actually a ways further, we suggest you top the sign with directional signage saying "Lynden's Dutch Village - 2 miles."



After reaching Lynden's gateway sign, we drove through an unimpressive commercial district, and then reached a residential neighborhood (top left). This gives the impression that that's all there is to Lynden. If we didn't know better, we would have turned around and left, thinking Lynden sure isn't much. That's why it's so important to have a good wayfinding system. Include an attractive sign that tells people "Lynden's Dutch Village ahead 1/2 mile."

The city of Woodlands, Texas, has these beautiful gateway signs on the borders of its downtown (top right). They don't mark the city limits - instead they create a sense of arrival at the downtown core. Use gateway signs to create that sense of arrival - not at the city limits, but at the destination you're trying to get people to visit. This sign is far too small to achieve that sense of arrival (bottom left).

Suggestion: Give downtown its own unique name. Just as Market Street (top right) is Woodland's downtown.

The Pearl District in Portland, OR

"Business District" or "Historic Downtown" or "Historic Business Center" don't attract people nearly as much as a special name for a downtown. Those words are designations, but not destinations. Consider giving the downtown core of Lynden a special name. Think about The Pearl District in Portland (top left).

Many towns and cities do this (top right). Doesn't "Village Square" or "Dutch Village" sound more like a fun place to spend your time than "business center" or "downtown?"

We suggest each city give their downtown a special, unique name. It can have a big impact.

When we reached downtown, all I could say was "Wow!" It is stunning. The beautification (bottom left) is gorgeous, and the creativity of painting these murals on the blank wall (bottom right) is inspiring. What a great job.

I'm going to show this photo all over the country as an example of what to do right in a downtown (top left). The bench flanked by a pair of beautiful pots is excellent, and the sign - "Take your time, look around. Parking's free." That's great. So few towns understand the value of making sure shoppers have enough time to spend as much money as they want without having to worry about tight parking constraints.

Lynden is absolutely stunning - it's one of the prettiest towns I've seen. Fantastic.

The Visitor Information Center is very attractive (bottom right). It could use some outdoor brochure holders to provide 24/7 visitor information. You'd want to put "The Best of Lynden" brochure in those holders. Are there public restrooms?

Having my local friend guide me around allowed me to see some "hidden gems." Be sure to include hidden gems in your promotional materials - things locals would know about and are fun to explore, but may not be a strong enough draw to be the primary reason to visit. I got to see this little mall (top left), which is just great.

With fun little photo opportunities like this (top right), consider adding a little sign that says #Lynden, or #DutchLynden - whatever is appropriate. Have another little sign that says "Free WiFi" encouraging visitors to take their photos there and post them to Facebook right there. That's a great way to promote Lynden using social media - it's great word-of-mouth promotion.

This is a great little mall. You can even visit Trixie, the monkey (bottom left). If people go into the shop to see Trixie, perhaps they'll buy something as well.

For outdoor dining, always put the tables and chairs against the building, not right next to traffic (bottom right). How many people would feel comfortable having a car pull into a parking space so close to you that it might bump your leg? It also makes it easier for serving tables if they are right next to the building, and there is still room for passersby on the sidewalk.

The art center was fantastic (top left). The architecture, and everything about it was first rate.

We encourage all your restaurants to offer outdoor dining. This Greek restaurant (top right) has benches outside, and we suggest using this space for tables and chairs and umbrellas. Also, restaurants should always have outdoor beautification - some pots or planters. And anytime you have benches outside, they should always be flanked with pots.

If any of the towns don't allow outdoor dining, change the ordinances.

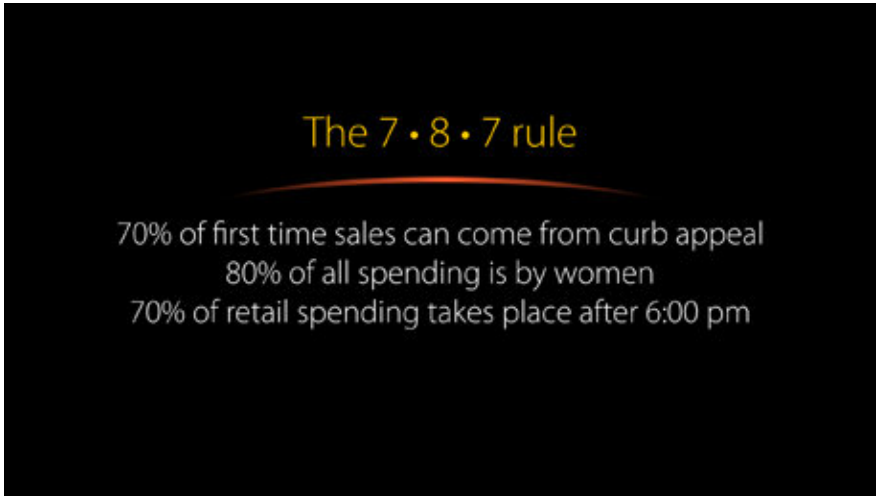
Successful downtowns have outdoor dining and sidewalk cafes. They bring a downtown to life! Outdoor dining can attract more people to your downtown.

In Newport on the Levee in Kentucky, there are many different options for outdoor dining (bottom left). This restaurant in Salem, Massachusetts (bottom right) uses pots of silk flowers for beautification and to set up an attractive barrier between the diners and the pedestrian traffic, creating a greater feeling of intimacy.

When sidewalks are too narrow to allow for ample outdoor dining, some towns all the restaurants to reroute pedestrians around the seating as they do in Wolfville, NS (top right and left). Part of its charm is the "organic" ambiance it creates. The merchants have built sidewalks to wrap around their dining spaces, and then made them decorative.

Canmore, AB (bottom left) does many things right. There is an abundance of outdoor dining, and this restaurant, with its little fence for intimacy and its geraniums, does a good job of being welcoming.

Another restaurant in Canmore, AB (bottom right). There's not a lot of space, but they make the most of it. This outdoor dining looks lovely.



Even this little spot in Canmore (top left) only has room for two small tables, but they use it! When people are sitting here eating ice cream, it makes other people want to have some too.

Another example from Canmore (top right).

We've talked about how 70% of first time sales can come from curb appeal, and we've talked about the fact that 70% of retail spending takes place after 6:00 p.m. Another important statistic is that 80% of ALL retail spending is made by women. Women like to spend time in attractive places that make them feel safe. Beautification helps with both.

Note the photo bottom right. These men are relaxing while their partners are shopping. Provide plenty of benches!

This is downtown Lynden (top left). And so is this (top right). Note all the men sitting on the benches. They are so important.

Many of the merchants are doing a fantastic job with beautification, while some need to step up their game. Consider adding benches and pots here (bottom left).

Benches should always be against the building facade, facing the street.

Another great way to add beautification is to use outdoor displays of merchandise, like this furniture store in Canmore (bottom right).

We saw this great sign and display in Sisters, Oregon (top left). It's a great little piece of beautification. And outdoor cafes are a part of overall beautification - they look great and entice people to dine and spend time in the downtown.

We saw the great little museum (top right). It has very good curb appeal, and the carriage is fun to see outside. We didn't get a chance to go in, but we hope to next time we're in Lynden. Here are some general notes for museums:

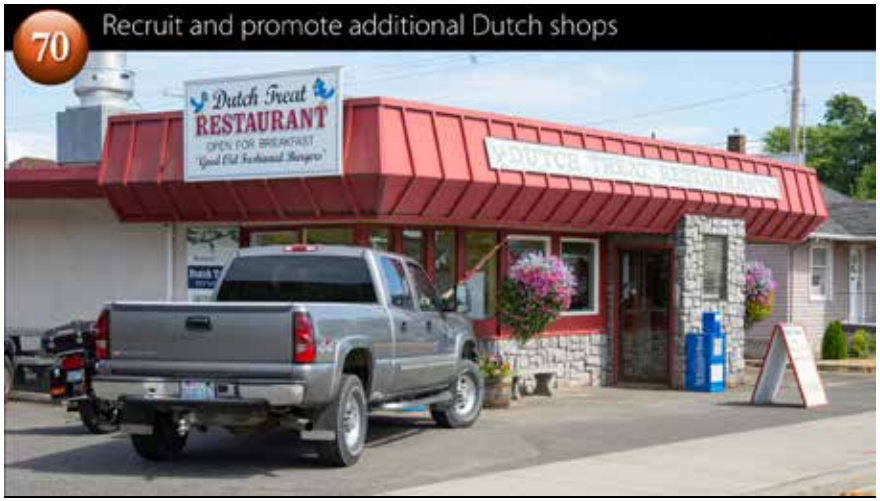
• The average museum visit lasts between 20 and 40 minutes.

• If you can captivate the visitor for two hours, spending will increase.

• Museums must tell stories, not just display artifacts with facts, dates, and figures.

• Most visitors don't really care who donated various items - it doesn't mean anything to them. Visitors would rather hear the stories about the people who used the items on display. How did they live? What interesting things happened to them? Bring the displays to life by making an emotional connection with your visitors. You do that with the stories.

Avoid these words: artifacts, collections, displays, donated by ...



We saw this building under construction (top left), but there were no signs telling us what it would be. Consider adding signage that says "Coming Soon!" and letting people know what it will be. That will build anticipation and be an invitation to come back.

We saw the Dutch Treat Restaurant (top right), which we've heard is a favorite of local farmers.

Consider recruiting additional Dutch businesses, shops, restaurants. Anything with a Dutch theme. Also consider enhancing some building facades downtown to make the Dutch theme more pervasive.

Consider visiting Pella, Iowa (bottom left), a Dutch-themed town. People will drive 3 hours just to visit the famed Jaarsma Bakery in Pella. Another themed town that would be great to visit is Solvang, California (bottom right).

We saw the golf course, and it looks beautiful (top left). We could see there is a restaurant there, but there's no signage to let people know if it is open for public play, if there are club and cart rentals, or if there is a pro shop. Suggest adding that information to the signage.

We saw the Lynden City Park, and it looks great (top right). My friend said that they call it "Million Smiles Park." Consider actually renaming the park "Million Smiles," or something with a little more flair and appeal than just City Park.

We drove up to the Lynden border crossing and saw that there is a lot of construction going on (bottom left and right). There were no signs telling what the construction was about, though. It would be great if they would add signage to let travelers know - are they expanding the crossing? Are new businesses going in? What's going on?

Lynden is a fabulous town. The setting among all the farmland (top left) makes it extra special - we love the agricultural atmosphere. Even scenes like this (bottom left) and this (bottom right) are fun for visitors to see.

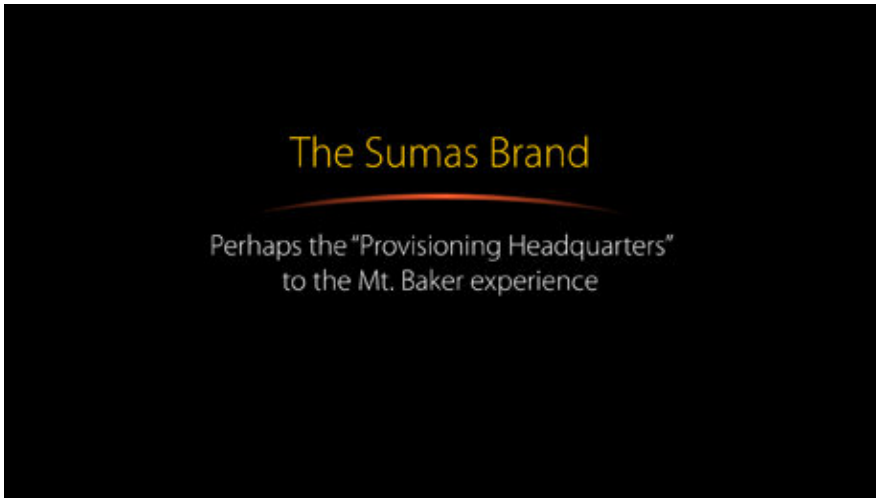
Suggestion: Work on more farm-to-table restaurants and shops. With the setting Lynden has, it's a natural fit, and it can tie in with the Dutch theme perfectly.

Like Fairhaven, Lynden is worth a special trip from Seattle. These two communities are Whatcom Counties "crown jewels." Together they make Whatcom County an overnight destination, and we haven't even talked about Bellingham yet. The importance of overnight visitors? They spend four times more than day visitors.

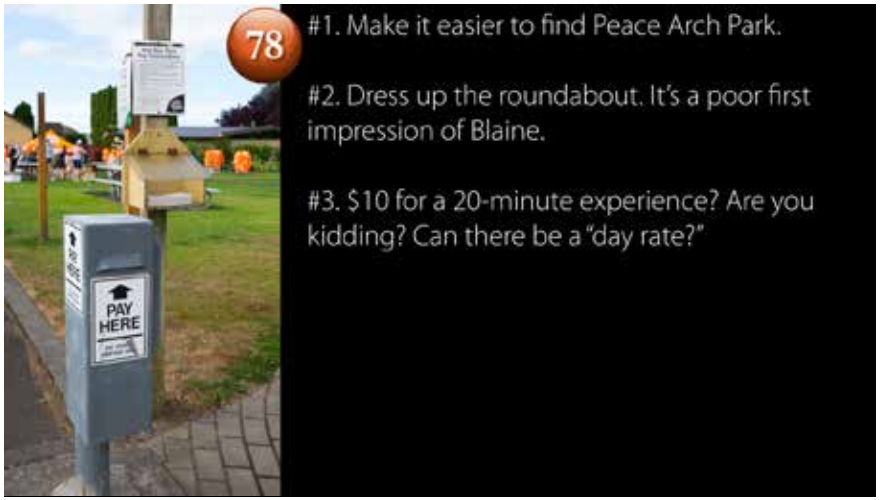
Branding comes down to what you want to be known for. Whatcom County has a great diversity of attractions and activities, and it would be great if it could be promoted as "pick your season/pick your passion." Then, if people are interested in art, they can go to Fairhaven and the arts in other parts of Bellingham. The experience in Lynden will be different from that in Birch Bay. Visitors could focus on the activities they want, and then go to the towns that offer those activities.

We drove on to Sumas, and it's a beautiful area. Nice gateway sign (top right), and very attractive pole banners (top left). I found many of the same shops and restaurants I found in other towns, so there wasn't a lot to set Sumas apart and give visitors a reason to head all the way there. However, there is the border crossing, and if people are headed to Abbotsford, they would likely want to go through Sumas.

We saw the gold miner (bottom left), and thought it would be a good spot for people to take snapshots and post to Facebook. Consider adding some interpretive signage and putting the statue a bit lower for photos. We also saw the old customs house (bottom right), but it doesn't appear to be open.



Sumas is a nice town, and I saw Bromley's Market (top left), and I was trying to think of a focus Sumas could use to attract visitors. Perhaps the "Provisioning Headquarters" for travelers on their way to Mt. Baker.



We continued our tour on to Blaine (top left). The last city before the border. Heading north, you take this exit (top right), and the exit says this is the way to Peace Arch Park. Going around this roundabout, there are no signs to the Park, except for a little, tiny one, easily missed.

This exit is the introduction to Blaine, and what you see are closed businesses (bottom left).

When you turn in to Peace Arch Park, the first thing you see is the parking fee - $10! That rate is so high, it's amazing anyone would go to this park.

Make it easier to find the park with better wayfinding signage, and beautify the roundabout - it's visitors' very first impression of Blaine, and you want to make a good one.

After parking, we looked around for the Peace Arch. Where is it? Add wayfinding signage to let people know where it is. We saw people pull into the parking lot, look around, and leave.

We saw the visitor information kiosk (top right), but it didn't have any helpful information about the park. The park brochure doesn't tell you how to find the Peace Arch or the sculptures, and really isn't very helpful. The brochure should include a map of the park so visitors can find their way around. Also, this visitor information kiosk should also have brochures and info about Whatcom County. It's a wasted opportunity. The park is in a beautiful setting, but it doesn't fulfill expectations. It needs wayfinding, more information, and less expensive parking.

On into Blaine!

The diner (bottom left) looks very dated. It could use updated landscaping and new paint colors. Brown, beige, and gray don't really pull customers in.

We went back out to the entrance and the roundabout to start over. Unfortunately, the Subway looks pretty drab too (bottom right). It could use fresh paint and refreshed landscaping.

Gorgeous gateway sign. So far, so good.

Beautiful pole banners!

83 It was hard to figure out where to get information. Add signage.

Blaine's gateway is very nice (top left). I wasn't sure if visitor information and restrooms were toward downtown or toward the harbor. The easier you make it for visitors, the more likely they are to spend time and money in your town.

I headed to the right toward the harbor and saw the very nice pole banners (top right). Found the Plover (bottom left), but there wasn't enough information to help visitors on the sign. A couple had stopped, and I overheard them discussing the ferry. They thought it was the right ferry to Semiahmoo, but weren't sure how often it ran, how long it took, or if they could just walk there instead. Add a little more information to the sign: distance, how often it runs, cost.

Make it easy for visitors to find where they need to go - there wasn't enough directional signage in the parking lot to guide people to the ferry.

We saw a sign for Blaine Pier, but we never found the pier.

We saw Marine Park, which is pretty and has some fun displays (top left). And from here I could see the Peace Arch!

If this stage is ever used (top right), add a readerboard to let people know about upcoming performances. Invite us back!

The public parking (bottom left) is in a location with nothing around it to do.

The Blaine harbor area is in a beautiful setting, and it has a nice marina, but there are dozens of marinas in the county and in Washington State. There weren't any activities we could find, other than a short walk. The Plover does give you a ferry ride to Semiahmoo, but if you're not staying there, you won't find much to do.

Next we drove into downtown Blaine. Suggestion: Don't allow chain-link fencing in your downtown. It makes it look like a prison.

Across the street we saw some nice buildings and pretty streetscapes, with great street trees and hanging baskets (top left). But so many of the buildings are vacant.

There is the Dairy (top right), which is great, but we can also find them in Bellingham, Lynden, and Sumas, so it's not unique to Blaine. Some merchants are really working hard to be attractive (bottom left), and their efforts are to be applauded.

But there are also sights like this (bottom right), with old storage cars and boarded up buildings, and it gives a poor impression.

Blaine, with its location on the border and on the coast, has so much potential to be a great town, and a favorite of visitors. It needs work to get there, though.

When we worked in Blaine a number of years ago, we wanted them to open up the waterfront and build a plaza for great activities, that would function as a gathering space for locals and visitors. Now the plazas are there (top left and bottom left), but they aren't used for anything.

There should be restaurants adjacent to them with outdoor cafe dining. The plazas need programming - activities held in the plazas to give people a reason to spend time there. They need beautification, outdoor furniture (tables, chairs, comfortable benches), and a focal point, such as a fountain.

Street entertainers, events, exhibits will really enliven them. Some plazas have large chess sets for the public to use, bocci games, and we've even seen places with pianos available for the public to play (downtown Denver). Plazas need to have plenty of food available - from restaurants or food trucks or kiosks.

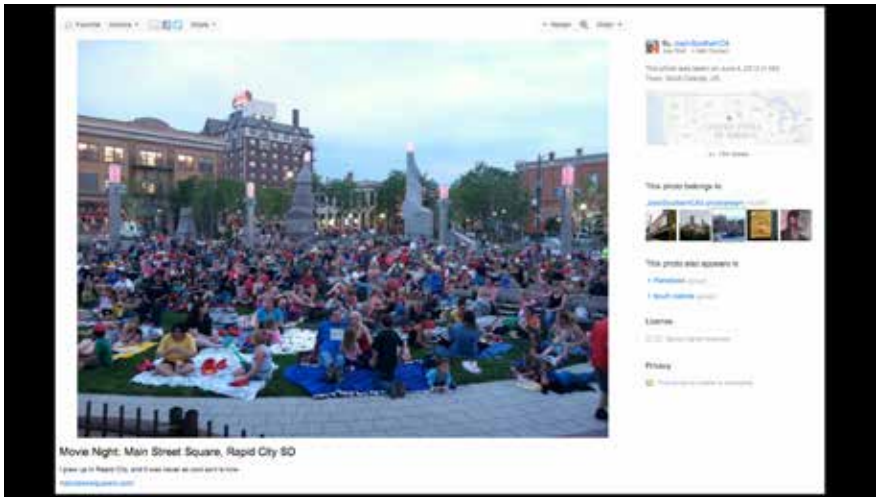
There needs to be programming of events, activities, and exhibits 250 days a year.

A terrific case history about a very successful public plaza is Rapid City, SD. They had attractions surrounding the city, but their downtown was dead. We recommended that they turn this parking lot (top left) into a programmed plaza (top right).

This space includes a stage, lawn area for seating or multi-purpose events, an interactive fountain, and ice skating throughout the winter. The plaza has several restaurants and shops bordering it.

The plaza is programmed year-round, so there is always something going on, and it has turned Rapid City into as big a tourism draw as Mt. Rushmore. Remember that plazas MUST be programmed, and they should always be commerce-driven, meaning they should be a place for vendors, performers, art shows, concerts, restaurants, food trucks, exhibitions, etc.

This photo shows downtown Rapid City at 10:00 a.m. on a Sunday (bottom left). The town was hosting a classic car show, and the town was packed.



Main Street Square cost $8 million, but they felt it could have been built for $5 million. Funding sources included philanthropy and city funds. They hold many varied types of events (top left). They plan to convert the lawn area to a high-quality artificial grass for practical reasons. The fountains at night are gorgeous (bottom left).

Rapid City's Main Street Square earns more than $120,000 each season just renting ice skates (top right). It's now a year round gathering area for locals and visitors.

During the summer months, the city hosts "Monday Night Movies on the Square," which draws more than 3,000 people into downtown Rapid City each Monday (bottom right).

An informal survey of 14 businesses say "Best thing Rapid City has ever done."

- There are no retail vacancies.
- There is a much lower turnover of retailers.
- Businesses now stay open later into the evenings.
- Many businesses have broken sales records.
- Average age of population is dropping - young people want to live there.
- Increase in conferences, conventions, and trade shows.

Attract locals downtown with activities, events, and fun things to do, and then retailers will follow. Retailers and restaurants will open where the people spend time.

Some of the businesses are doing a very good job, but there aren't enough to do it all by themselves. This fresh oyster merchant (top left) has a shop that looks great, but we weren't sure if it was a restaurant or a seafood merchant. Make the signage more clear.

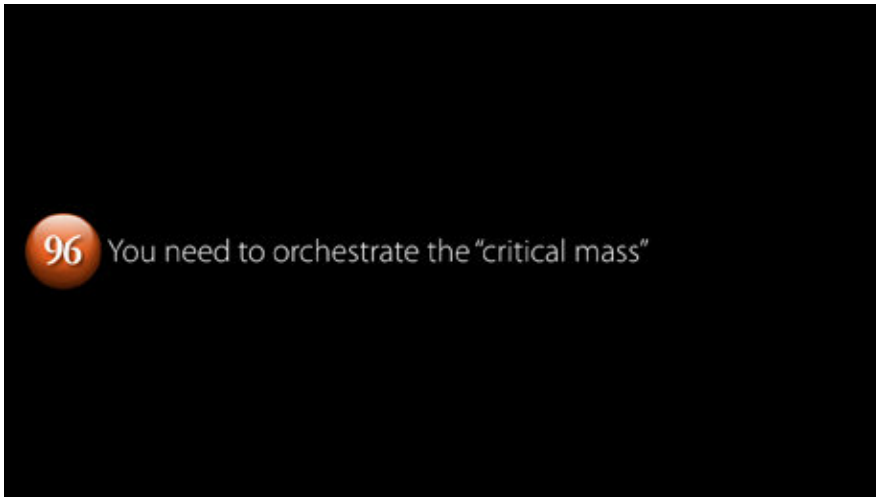
Tony's (top right) looks great too.

Some shops and restaurants need to step back and look at their stores with fresh eyes, like this one (bottom left). It does have some nice flowers, but the dumpsters and utility boxes next to the door detract from its appeal. They should be screened with nice cedar fencing and perhaps a row of Pyramidalis like these (bottom right).

Take down the Christmas lights (top left and right), and remove the take out boxes from inside the window. Remove weeds from the parking lot.

If there are empty sign brackets like those above (bottom left), they should be removed.

And add outdoor dining! (bottom right) Outdoor dining can really help bring a downtown to life. Use Catalina-style umbrellas and pots to add intimacy. This is a gorgeous building.



Some of the businesses are working very hard to do a good job and stay in business (top left and right). But there aren't enough of them to make downtown Blaine a destination for locals and visitors.

Sometimes it requires a recruitment effort. First, you get people to come downtown by making it a more active place - by programming plazas. Then, you recruit more businesses, and you orchestrate your business mix.

Downtown businesses are much more successful if they follow the Rule of Critical Mass: the 10+10+10 Rule. This would include a MINIMUM, in three lineal blocks:

- TEN places that sell food: soda fountain, coffee shop, bistro, cafe, fine dining, family restaurant, wine store, deli, bakery, confectionary.
- TEN destination retail shops: galleries, antiques, home accents, outfitters, collectibles, books, kitchen supplies, garden.
- TEN places open after 6:00 pm: entertainment, theater, performing arts, bars and bistros, specialty shops, dining, open air markets, etc.

Think antique malls - 10x the business when together

Think food courts, corner gas, lifestyle retail centers

Successful downtowns need to have a "critical mass" of like businesses. Think of antique malls, food courts, gas stations. People are attracted to the choices, and all the shops do more business when they are clustered together.

One great example is Argyle Street in Halifax (bottom left and right). They have at least 22 restaurants clustered in 2-1/2 blocks, and they are thriving.

Argyle Street is up a very steep hill in Halifax. It had a couple restaurants, but most people wanted to spend their time at the waterfront. One of the restaurant owners decided he'd like to try to develop a "restaurant row" on Argyle Street, complete with outdoor dining. He approached the city about giving up the parking spaces in front of his restaurant to allow for outdoor dining, and the city said okay. He recruited more restaurants, all providing outdoor dining, and the project took on a life of its own. Now, with 22 restaurants and more along the side streets (bottom right), Argyle Street is busier with dining and nightlife than the waterfront. And the city is building a huge convention center on Argyle Street. That is the power of "critical mass."

Another great restaurant on Argyle Street in Halifax (top left).

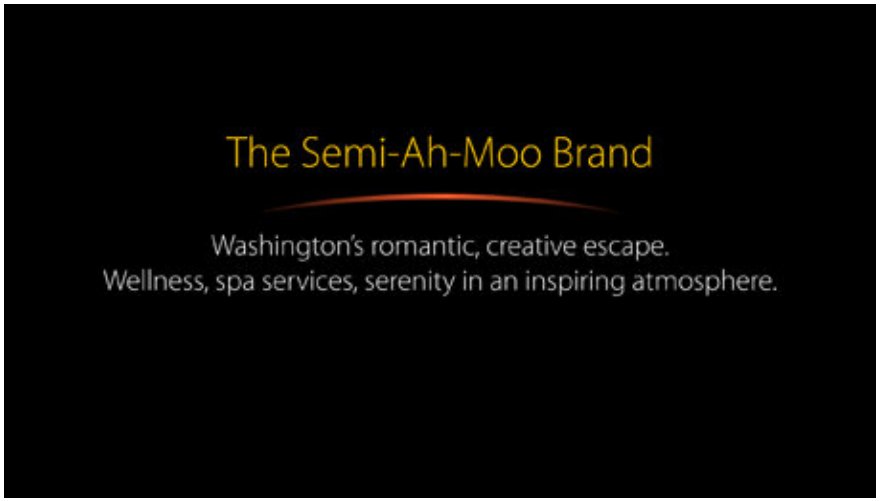
Achieving critical mass is well worth the effort. Work with the property owners and recruit the tenants you need to make downtown successful. It only takes one-third buy-in by property owners before the effort takes on a life of its own. Start with a focus of what you want Blaine to be known for.

I love this little cafe (top right). If Blaine wanted to develop a culinary brand, they could recruit 20 more restaurants, and they would be a destination for people from miles away. The city has great potential. The setting is unbeatable! (bottom left)

While in the area of Blaine, we had to go check out Semiahmoo. On our way, we saw this sign for tourist attractions (top left). There weren't any listed, so it's best to just take down the sign.

We saw the sign for the Great Blue Heron restaurant, and for the golf and country club, and we wondered if the golf course is open for public play (top right). If so, let us know on your signage.

I was so excited to see that Semiahmoo is open again. It is a fabulous place, and it's very exciting to see it coming back to life. It looks great.



We saw the trail, which we consider to be one of the best walking trails in the Northwest (top left). Walking trails are not the primary reason someone would drive two hours to visit, but they are a terrific amenity. It's worth taking the Plover from Blaine - a perfect "while you're here" activity.

Semiahmoo could be known as Washington's romantic, creative escape.

On to Bellingham - next 7 exits (bottom left).

The first exit doesn't have signs telling you where to go to find anything. The wayfinding on the freeway doesn't match up with the signs off the freeway. On the freeway, signs tell you to take the next exit for the sculpture exhibit, but once off the freeway, you only find wayfinding to shopping, Seahome Village, downtown, and Lakeway Center. I never found Seahome Village or Lakeway Center.

We did find the Sehome Hill Arboretum (top left), so we decided to check it out. Came to a parking lot and thought this must be where the arboretum is located (top right). But no, I followed the road as it continued and found this sign telling about the arboretum (bottom left). Add "Welcome" to your text - it's always important to welcome visitors to your attractions, parks, and amenities. Let people know you're glad they came. Add some map brochures in a weather-proof brochure holder so that visitors can take information with them to navigate the trail and learn about the arboretum.

We saw the tunnel, which was very pretty. The interpretive sign for the tunnel (bottom right) is in need of maintenance, in fact, the whole arboretum could use some TLC.

We found the lookout tower (top left) which is a very cool structure. A family was just coming down and they told us not to bother going up, because you couldn't see any views from the top. We went up anyway, and they were right (top right). What a shame!

Suggestion: Trim some of the alder trees back. Try to create some view corridors to make the arboretum a better experience.

Suggestion 105: Drop the arboretum from the marketing effort. It's a nice local asset, and makes for a pleasant walk, but it's not a visitor attraction.

Saw that there was visitor information at the University campus, and I went to check it out. The sign says "closed" (bottom left). But there's information available, so it's not closed. Turn off the closed sign - even if it's not staffed, there's information available, and you don't want to tell people to go away unnecessarily. Add information about the University! (bottom right)

In spite of the visitor information "closed" sign, the building was open (top left). I went in, and there was plenty of visitor information available (top right), even though the staff wasn't on duty.

We saw the visitor information sign on I-5 northbound - add the sign for southbound travelers as well (bottom left).

We went into the tourism office (bottom right), and they did a very good job of answering questions and helping. The office looks great, is welcoming, and it provides 24/7 information outside.

While there, I asked about a a good place to have lunch. Many VICs won't give you the names of specific restaurants (which is very non-visitor-friendly), but these folks did. They recommended a restaurant and gave me directions. Yay!

I found it, and it's a place I probably wouldn't have chosen without the recommendation I received, because it really didn't have any beautification and was in a strip mall (top left). And it was great! Terrific, fresh food!

As I was leaving I looked around and saw a great looking micro-brew pub across the street (bottom left), and a wonderful market on another corner (bottom right). What a terrific corner. I came away with a pound of cherries after eating my lunch. The intersection of James and Carolina is worth promoting!

I wanted to take a look at the Bellingham Airport (top left), and I have to say that it is first class. It's gorgeous (top right). An airport that would be a pleasure to travel from.

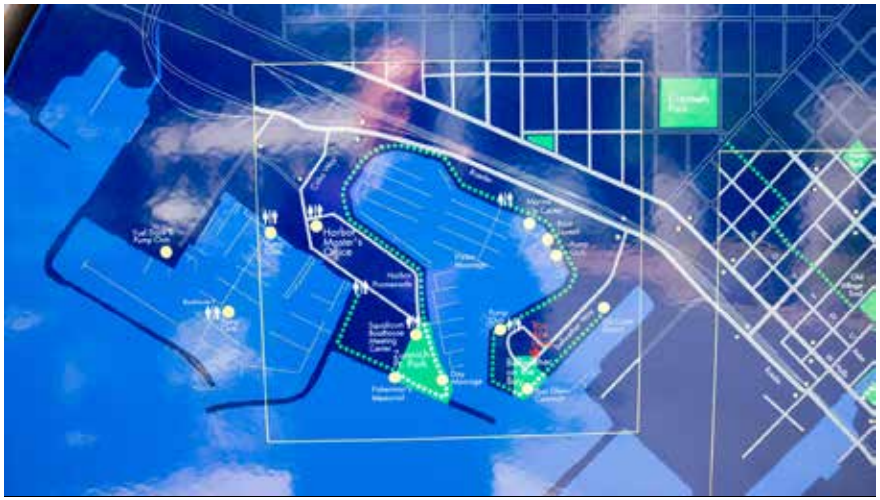
While there, I saw two reasons people would come all the way from Seattle: the helicopter tours and the scenic flights (bottom left). Can you imagine the amazing scenic flights and helicopter tours over some of the most beautiful scenery in the country? The San Juans and Mt. Baker would be awesome to see from the air. These would be worth coming a long way for.

It's important to promote your "anchor tenants" - those attractions that make you worth a special trip. They need to be promoted specifically. Then, while people are here, they'll spend time shopping, going to restaurants, spending the night, etc. And the longer they stay, the more they will spend.

We got back on I-5 to go to downtown Bellingham. There are numerous exits for Bellingham, and checked out many of them, not knowing which ones led to downtown. This sign (top left) indicates that there are historic attractions off this exit, but once you leave I-5, there are no more signs to help you find them.

We finally came to the exit that says "City Center" (top right). We suggest you change the name to "Downtown" rather than City Center. There were a number of restaurants and tourist activities noted on signs along I-5, but once you leave the freeway, there are no additional signs to help find them. A county-wide wayfinding system would fix that problem. Always make sure your directional signage extends all the way to the destination.

As soon as you get off I-5, there are signs indicating that you are downtown (bottom left). The whole area is not downtown - you want to differentiate your downtown shopping district from the outer parts of the city. Consider calling this area "uptown." And we suggest you give the true downtown its own unique name, making it a destination. The pole banners are beautiful (bottom left), and here is the gateway into the true downtown (bottom right). Very nice.



I decided to start out at the waterfront, and it was easy to find. I found the Bellwether (top left), and the waterfront looks great. I noticed these information panels (top right), but they didn't have a lot of information on them. Consider adding more information, cross-selling other parts of downtown, shops, restaurants, activities, events, and more.

Having the map (bottom left) was good, but it would have been even better to have a small map brochure I could take with me.

The Bellwether looks gorgeous (bottom right), and I've always wanted to stay there. I had asked my assistant to look into it, and she said that the TripAdvisor reviews weren't very good - that the lodging seemed "dated." So when the manager of the Townplace Suites called and invited me to stay there, we went with them.

It's critical to watch your reviews on TripAdvisor. Always respond. If they are negative, don't respond defensively; thank the reviewer and tell them how you are working to make the situation better. Responding to reviews goes a long way to alleviating any negative effects of the review. It shows you care.

We saw Blues, Brews & BBQ (top left), and it looks like so much fun. These types of places are what makes Bellingham worth a special trip.

We saw the sailing classes in the bay (top right), and thought this was so cool! I called my wife and daughter and said that next time we visit Washington, I want us to bring them and the grandkids up to Bellingham and do this. One thing about multi-generational travel is that we want it to be activities that will create wonderful, lasting memories.

The setting in Bellingham (bottom left) is fantastic. It's the activities that attract people, though.

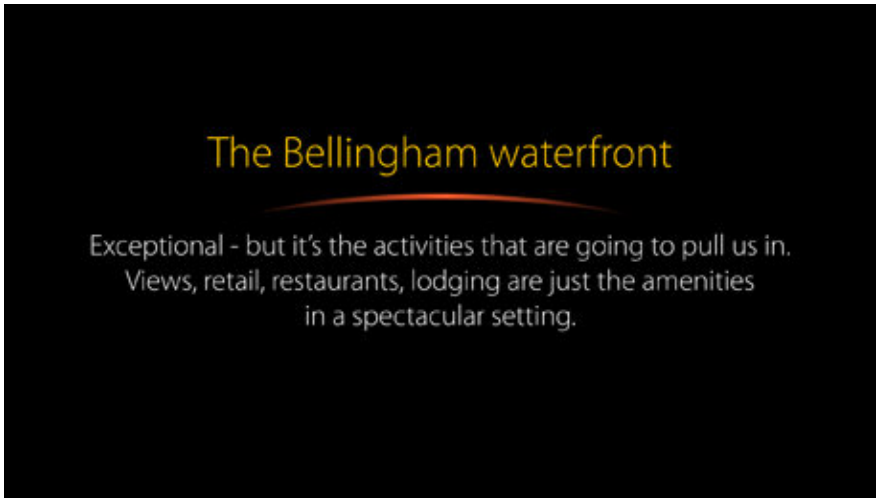
One time we came to Bellingham and had dinner with friends at Giuseppe's (bottom right). It was awesome. This should be one of Bellingham's "Best Ofs."

One thing I noticed about Bellweather is that it seems that whoever can pay the rent is allowed to set up shop. There isn't an orchestrated business mix. There are some nice spas (top left), but there's also an Edward Jones office, and other offices. Work towards having an orchestrated business mix so that you can achieve a critical mass of like businesses - that's what will attract people to the area.

We saw the outstanding Squalicum Harbor gateway sign (top right). It is very well done - it really makes a statement.

These are the activities that make Bellingham worth a special trip and an overnight stay (bottom left and right). Kayak rentals with a wonderful bay to use them on, other marine and outdoor activities, and sailing and boating in the San Juans, with Bellingham as the hub or starting point. These should be promoted.

Cruises and whale watching tours (top left) are also fantastic activities, as well as specialty cruises, like the Beer & Brats Cruise (top right). Fly fishing, paddle boarding and lessons (bottom left and right) are also extra-special activities that should be promoted.



But how can anyone take advantage of all the wonderful activities at the waterfront when they can only park for two hours? (top left) Two hour parking limits can kill a downtown. Is there all-day parking anywhere nearby? There should be, and there should be signs that direct visitors to the all-day parking.

Instead of calling it "Old Town," think up a more descriptive name - a name that evokes emotion, such as "The Distillery District" or "The Seaport District."

The area looks great. We loved the picnic benches outside the Waterfront Seafood & Bar (bottom right).

The Chuckanut Brewery looks great (top left), and Jalapenos (top right) looks fun with its bright facade. It could use more beautification - add some pots and a more pedestrian-friendly entrance.

We saw the workforce training center and saw that it has a happy hour (bottom left). This was confusing - is this a restaurant? If so, where is the sign? Make it obvious what you are - add a permanent sign here letting people know you are a restaurant.

This museum is an iconic building (bottom right). It's gorgeous.

There was very little parking, though. All the spaces were full, but there is plenty of room to add more parking spaces here (top left).

The mural (top right) is beautiful, and the wayfinding signage is good and easy to read. However, your wayfinding should also include directions to the other districts, such as the Arts District.

We did find the Arts District (bottom left), and it's fantastic. Good pole banners, and I saw the Pickford Film Center (bottom right), which looks great. By the time I found a place to park, though, I forgot where the Spark Museum was - I could have driven there, but it didn't have any place to park. The open hours are too restrictive - you can call for an appointment to see the museum, but how many visitors will actually do that?

I was, frankly, amazed at what a great place Bellingham has become (top left). It's very cosmopolitan - it's come so far from what it used to be when I lived there years ago. Every time I came into downtown, night or day, it was busy - alive with people. I remember Rocket Donuts (top right) and now it is very cool.

Having the vendor booths on the plaza (bottom left) is great. The Mt. Baker Theater is also a terrific place (bottom right). There needs to be more of a connection made between this area and downtown, though. A good wayfinding system will help with that.

I saw alleys in Bellingham like this (top left), and it made me think of Art Alley in Rapid City, South Dakota. In Rapid City, they've allowed graffiti artists go wild (top right, bottom left and right).

They have set rules for the graffiti: No swastikas; no profanity; respect other people's art (so don't paint over other people's work). They also require that approval of the property owners is given first.

They've painted everything, and it's such a wide variety of styles and subject matter that it would be impossible to get bored looking at it. In fact, it has become a huge tourism attraction.

Here are some more examples of Art Alley in Rapid City (top left and right). This is a great way to show the creative, artistic spirit of the community and make an attraction for both locals and visitors to enjoy.

Suggestion: Give the downtown core its own name. There are many different districts that all currently fall under the umbrella of downtown, and you could differentiate the core downtown shopping area with its own unique name. Use the name to promote a "feeling" - evoke emotion.

The center of downtown should be Holly & Railroad Avenue (bottom right). This intersection should be beautified and decorated.

At the center of Brea, California, they decorated the intersection with these pavers (top left). It looks fantastic, and really makes a statement.

Another idea is to use StreetPrint's duratherm of stamping and coloring asphalt (top right). It is weather resistant and durable enough to withstand snow removal. It can be done in any color and design, and it's an excellent way to dress up an intersection or to make decorative crosswalks.

I was so impressed with downtown Bellingham, I couldn't stop taking photos. It is an awesome downtown, and it is so much more than what I had been expecting. The streets, shops, restaurants - everything looks fun and vibrant.

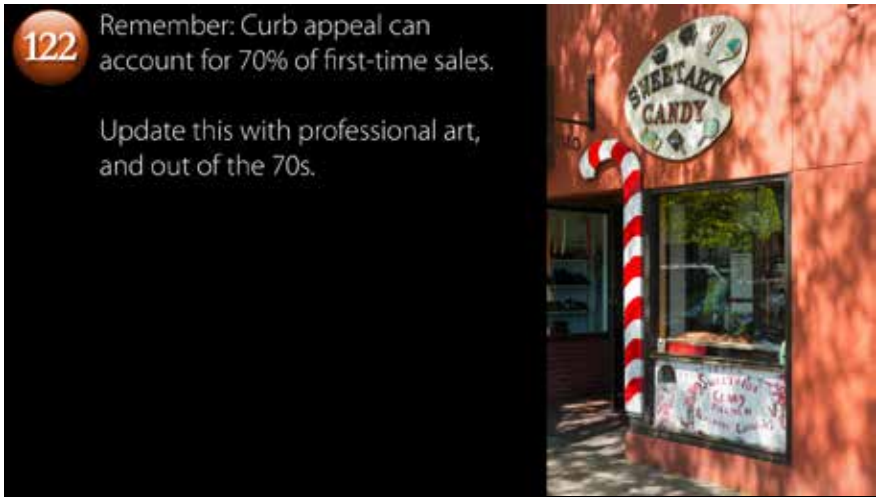
What a great way to do planters with a theme (top far right). This is awesome.

There were three situations that I experienced while downtown that were very negative, and very concerning. Three times I witnessed men suddenly start screaming profanities at other people. Once it was a man who started screaming at a woman in a car. Every word from his mouth was a profanity.

She was terrified. Another time a man started screaming at another man on the sidewalk. The man was going to turn around and engage in a confrontation, and I stopped him, and just told him to let it go. Fortunately he did. Three times I saw this happen in my short time in downtown Bellingham, and they were all during the middle of the day. Only once did I see a policeman, that was in front of the police station itself.

You need to have more of a police presence downtown. Those situations are frightening for people, and it gives the very strong impression that downtown Bellingham is not safe. This situation needs to be brought under control.

I wasn't sure what type of place Shakedown was (bottom far left). I thought it was a bike shop, but it turns out it's a bar. Merchants need to make it obvious what type of establishment they have - what it is they're selling. Promote the primary lure before the name of the store. Perhaps "Shakedown Bar"?

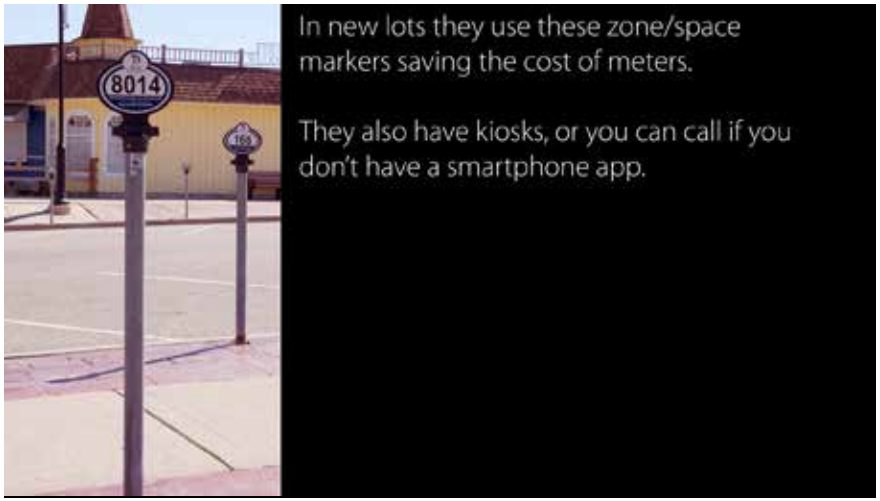


I cannot say enough great things about downtown Bellingham. But you know what's really going to get us to come downtown? It's these activities (top left). The Mount Baker Bicycle Club event. Beer, improv & food truck. Summer nights. These things are awesome.

The events will bring us here for the first time. Then, once we see it, we'll want to come back.

So, we might come here initially for the kayaking, the boating, the bicycling, the events, but after we're done, we want to have things to do after 6:00. Fortunately, Bellingham does have enough restaurants, bars, and activities that are open later into the evening hours.

Time to address the parking issue in downtown Bellingham. Three times I had to go into a bank to get change to feed your old, outdated parking meters. Once, when I was waiting in line holding a five dollar bill, the manager saw me and asked if I just needed change for parking. When I answered yes, he asked me how many rolls of quarters I would like. That is really sad.



Technology has advanced for paid parking, and Bellingham should jump on board. There are several options, but I'll share one option with you.

Passport parking maps out every parking space and mounts stickers that have a QR code on each meter. There is a small user fee, but no cost to the city. People pay a little more to park for the convenience they receive.

You can pay for your parking by phone, by quarter, or by credit card at a kiosk.

The app to pay by phone is free. You can also call them and pay by phone.

My first time experience, I scanned the QR code. Within 20 seconds I had the app. It uses location services to determine my location, and I gave myself a user name and password. I entered the zone and space, then I input a credit card, and entered how long I wanted to pay for.

The app told me that even though the meter wouldn't show any time, they know I paid for the parking. It would text me 15 minutes prior to my time limit. If the meter allows for more time, I can recharge it by paying for more time. This only took three minutes. Easy way to pay for parking.

Parking kiosks operate from a solar panel on top. In new lots they use zone/space markers, saving the cost of installing meters. It's easy for the customer and for the city, and it saves the city money.

Parking should not be a general fund revenue source. It should be put back into the district from which it was earned.

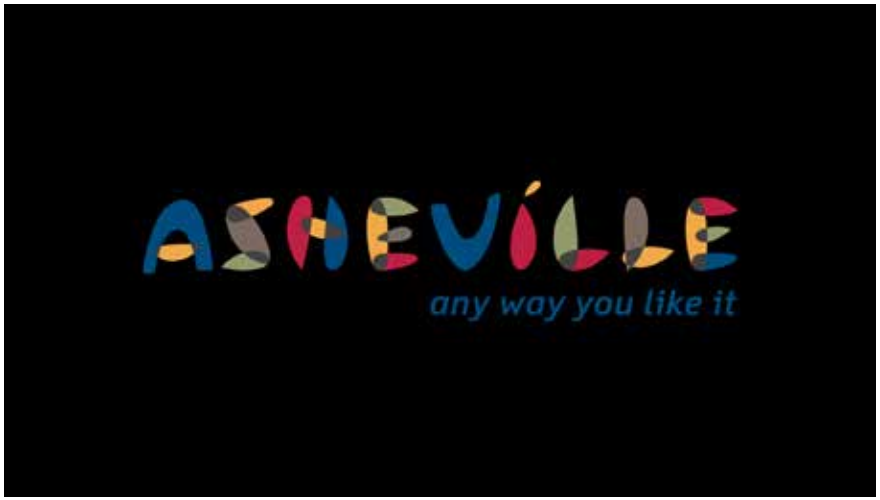
I was glad to hear that you are fixing this parking garage entrance (bottom left) so that it won't be so scary.

Can you tell what's in any of these shops? (bottom right) Bellingham needs to start a blade sign program. Perpendicular signs make it possible for people to see what shops are down the street.

Can you see what's in any of these shops? (top left and right) Give us a reason to walk down the street by enticing us with signs that tell us what we'll find. Most successful downtowns use blade signs. They should be decorative, a consistent height and size, and promote what it is the shop is selling before the name of the shop.

This market (bottom left and right) is fabulous! What a great asset for the city, its locals, and for visitors. But it's almost a crime that it isn't used for more than the one day a week farmers market. It should be in use at least four days a week, nearly every week of the year. It can be more than a farmers market, becoming a public market with local crafts, prepared foods, concerts and performances, events and exhibits. Public markets are tourism draws - they are major attractions.

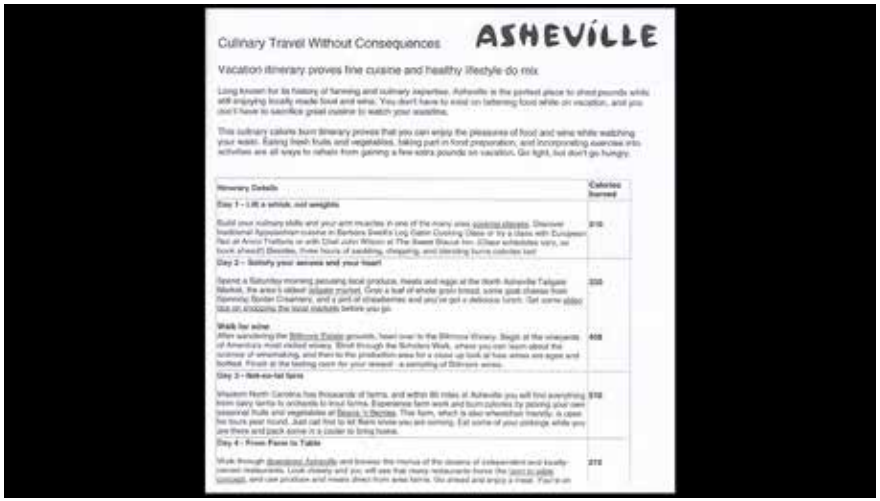
I did see some posters about the farmers market, but there should be signs that tell people when and where the market is. If any other events are currently held here, I didn't see anything about them.



The yellow star (top left) shows the intersection of Railroad Avenue and Holly, which is pretty much the center of downtown. The Market Depot is at the bottom blue star, and the transit station is the top blue star. Pretty much your entire downtown core is within the yellow highlighted area. This should be the boundary of the area you call downtown - and we suggest you give it a special name, such as "Rail District." Each of the other areas - the waterfront, the arts district, have their own designations. Don't try to make your downtown too big. You have enough unique attractions in the other districts for them to stand on their own.

Thinking about what sets Bellingham, and each city and town in Whatcom County, apart, we came up with some of our own ideas. Our thoughts:

- Lake Samish: Stand-up paddle boarding, serene, peaceful.
- Fairhaven: One of the best art towns in the West with a touch of irreverence.
- Ferndale: Western, pioneer spirit, saloons: a classic car and motorcycle gathering place.
- Birch Bay: Family beach getaway. Warmer waters, kinder beaches, flat-out fun.


Culinary Travel Without Consequences

ASHEVILLE

Vacation itinerary proves fine cuisine and healthy lifestyle do mix

More branding ideas:

• Lynden: Washington's Dutch village with farm to table dining.
• Sumas: Provisioning headquarters for the Mt. Baker experience.
• Semiahmoo: Washington's romantic, creative retreat. Wellness, spa, serenity in an inspiring setting.
•Bellingham: Washington's Microbrew & Distillery Capital. Mixed with funky, edgy people and creative souls in a truly organic setting.

We felt that Bellingham makes a perfect bookend to Portland. In fact, Bellingham makes us think of Asheville, North Carolina. With the Biltmore Estate, Asheville has the finest in fine culture, combined with a downtown of counter-culture. It's funky, fun, and fabulous. It has itineraries that promote culinary travel without consequences (top left), telling you what activities to do in their town to burn off the delicious food you've enjoyed. Its wayfinding signs are topped with unique finials that display the town's artistry (top right).

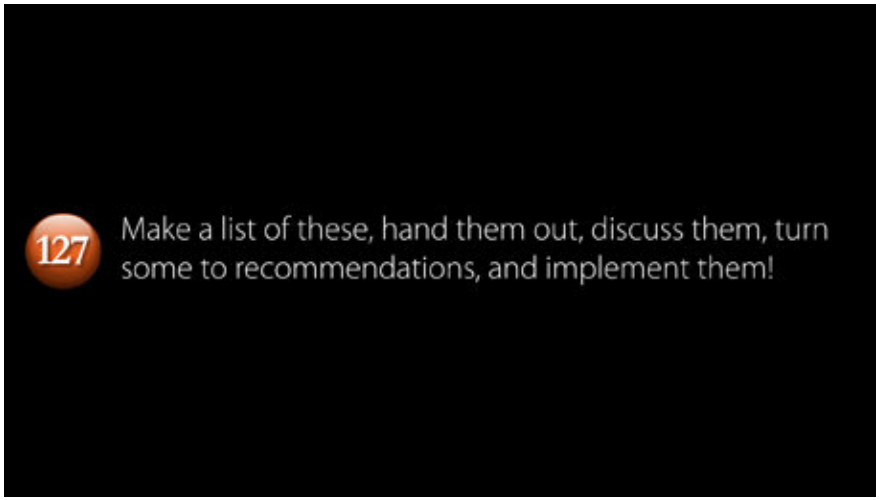
Asheville turned some of its transportation shelters into vendor stalls, where local artisans sell their unique wares (bottom left). They converted their closed Woolworth store into a co-op gallery of up-and-coming artists (bottom right).

Asheville has street musicians and performers all day, every day (top left and right). They have chessboards in their downtown parks, where locals gather every day to try to beat their most challenging opponents (bottom left). Downtown Asheville is active and alive every day, all day, all year round.

Livability.com named Asheville one of the "top five cities to live in" in the U.S.

Fodor's named Asheville the number one place they were going to in 2011 (bottom right).

Bellingham is just as fabulous.



So how do you package all this into an umbrella brand for Whatcom County?

First of all, you don't market the county - people aren't interested in going to a county. You market the unique blend of activities that people can't find closer to home. You market the overall feeling that people will find here. Some thoughts:

• An amazing blend of spirits

What you have here is flat-out amazing. Pick your season. Pick your passion. Marketing your activities by passion will entice visitors here.

Make a list of these suggestions, discuss them, and make plans to bring the suggestions that have merit to life in your communities. Work together.

And remember: "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is today."

Marketing Assessment

Visitor Information Website: www.bellingham.org

Like many visitor websites, this one leads with the location. While that may seem like the obvious choice, it is actually more effective to lead with experiences first, location second. People don't make the decision to visit a community based first on its location. They choose to visit a place because of what they will do when they are there.

The "Things To Do" section is quite extensive, but is broken into categories that are helpful. The one thing it lacks is a distinct focus – answering the question, what makes Bellingham worth a special trip?

Itineraries are a great way to showcase what a community has to offer and help a potential visitor envision and plan their trip. The PDF itinerary cards are a nice feature.

The one thing I'd suggest with the itineraries is perhaps making them easier to find and more prominent, perhaps with a button on the sidebar.

There are a lot of sections that are quite copy heavy. This is a bit hard to avoid, because the website is the place for detail. But try to incorporate more photography and bullet points amid the portions of text. Most people scan internet copy, and you want to make it easy for them to find what they're looking for.

The site also uses "list marketing" – that is, simply listing everything in any given category. While there may be space for lists on a website, lists don't do enough to close the sale. There should be more focus on what makes Bellingham unique, and that includes the experiences and attractions. Promote the "anchor tenants" first and foremost and everyone will benefit.

Printed marketing materials

We received a very large packet of marketing materials, including a visitor guide and various individual brochures and maps. It was nice how they were tucked into a folder.

Visitor Guide

The visitor guide is a nice piece, overall. The quality is excellent, and the layout, despite having advertising, isn't as busy as many community visitor guides can be.

We love the way it is laid out with the various activities first, then the communities, food, lodging, and additional information.

The recreation and entertainment sections are nicely done, with lots of enticing photography and descriptions of activities.

For the Trails, we suggest you have trail maps on your website and refer to the downloadable page URL in the brochure, so visitor have the option of downloading and printing the maps in addition to stopping by your visitor information center. Only about 5% of visitors actually will stop at a VIC.

In your golfing section, be sure to let readers know if a golf course is open for public play.

It bears keeping in mind the use and audience for any printed materials. Most people do their planning online, but once they are in the area, they use printed guides for reference and to refine their itineraries, double-checking what they want to do.

Understanding the audience and use of the piece may help inform the layout and content of future editions, with a focus on making it useful for the visitor while they are in Bellingham.

This piece should include more emphasis on top attractions and activities, as well as easy to read descriptions and information that is relevant to the visitor who is already there, rather than making it a sales piece designed to entice visitors to come. There's really not enough detail to use the visitor guide to plan an itinerary or decide what to do once in the area. Add more specific information, such as, for each community, include perhaps five each of the top local picks for activities, dining, photo opportunities, events, and hidden gems.

The website is where most decision-making takes place. The printed materials are used primarily to make the visit more enjoyable.

Brochures

There are a number of brochures and rack cards, catering to individual tastes and categories.

One important thing to mention about brochures and rack cards is that the location should never be at the top. Lead with the experience. For example, the whale watching brochure says "WHALES" at the top. This is what people will see in a brochure display. Visitors will see the title, know instantly what the brochure is about, and grab accordingly.

Brochures that lead with location don't do anything to tell the visitor what they'll find. Again, people don't make decisions based on locations, they make decisions based on what they want to DO.

Another example: the Chuckanut Drive brochure leads with "Chuckanut Drive." Instead, this brochure could have a title such as, "Scenic Drive," which tells the visitor exactly what this brochure is for. If they are interested in learning more, they will take one and the info about where the drive is located will be there.

We loved the Whatcom Wine & Spirits Trail brochure. It has a good map and enough information about each featured winery and distillery to be helpful. Suggestion: Name it simply "Wine & Spirits Trail" in bright yellow text on a dark background, and then, below, add Whatcom County.

The various maps in the map brochures were quite good. It is very common to find maps that are not helpful at all, and yours are some of the best we've seen.

For each town's brochure, consider creating a "Best Of" guide instead of the existing brochure (more on that below).

We suggest adding these marketing pieces to your repertoire:

"Best Of" Guides for Bellingham, for Lynden, for Blaine, for Fairhaven, and for Birch Bay. If you feel that other towns need their own "Best Of" guides as well, that's fine.

What do you have in Whatcom County that I can't get anywhere else? Your "anchor tenants" are your very best businesses or attractions that people would go out of their way specifically to visit. You need to promote them in "Best Of Guides."

Use fairly strict criteria to select which businesses will be included. These brochures can be a public/private partnership, with the invited participants contributing the cost for their panel. Include the best shops, best restaurants, and best activities for each town, and each "best" would have a full panel. They should not look like ads, though. They should be in an advertorial format, with some great photography and very specific text to let visitors know why this is one of the best.

Don't include lodging facilities in these brochures, because we want lodging facilities to hand them out. They should be available at all visitor information centers and kiosks, as well as at lodging facilities, retail shops and restaurants throughout the county.

With some flexibility, the criteria should include:

- Must be highly regarded (80%+ positive peer reviews, regional publications)
- Must have good curb appeal
- Must be open year round (with some exceptions)
- Must be open until at least 6:00 pm and be open six days a week
- Must be unique to your town (no chains)

These "Best Of" Guides are very effective at increasing visitor spending – you are promoting specific attractions, shops, and restaurants, and those specifics are what can really lure visitors to the towns. They want to check out these great places. While they are there, they will also go into the other businesses, especially if they have great curb appeal. Everyone benefits.

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