

CALL FOR PROPOSAL
HOTEL-MOTEL TAX TOURISM PROPOSALS SOUGHT

TO: Everett Herald
Whidbey Weekly
Stanwood-Camano News
Stanwood-Camano News
Whidbey News-Times
Whidbey Daily News
The Crab Cracker

FROM: Island County Board of Commissioners

DATE: June 10, 2025

THE PROGRAM YEAR 2026
ISLAND COUNTY 2% HOTEL-MOTEL TOURISM LODGING TAX
APPLICATION PERIOD: JULY 1, 2025- AUGUST 1, 2025

The 2026 Island County 2% Hotel-Motel Tax Tourism Promotions application packet will be available beginning July 1st. Funding is generated from overnight lodging in the unincorporated areas of Island County. This program aims to support and promote the tourism economy and regenerative tourism in Island County.

Island County estimates \$725,000 of lodging tax revenue (including up to 38% of the total amount allocated to chambers of commerce (and all chamber events); 20% allocated to museums, historical societies, and Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve; 30% allocated to non-chamber related community events; and 13% allocated for one-time capital funding requests). Historically, the program has funded approximately 25-30 proposals for Whidbey and Camano Island events, visitor centers, and tourism activities.


Lodging tax revenues may only be used as provided in RCW 67.28.1816(1). This section provides that lodging tax revenues "may be used, directly by any municipality or indirectly through a convention and visitors bureau or destination marketing organization" for:

- (a) Tourism marketing.
- (b) The marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists;
- (c) Supporting the operations and capital expenditures of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district created under Chapters 35.57 and 36.100 RCW or
- (d) Supporting the operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations described under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) and 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The Island County Lodging Tax Advisory Committee will review all timely and complete applications received by August 1st, then recommend funding to the Board of Island County Commissioners.

As established by state law, the review committee membership comprises representatives from entities that collect the lodging tax and organizations eligible to apply for grant funds. For this reason, a conflict-of-interest policy has been added to ensure public confidence in the ethical allocation of these tax dollars.

The proposal form will be posted on the county's website, and beginning July 1st, the application will be available <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/704/Lodging-Tax-Advisory-Committee>. It may also be requested by contacting Layla Tromble at la.tromble@islandcountywa.gov or 360-679-7353.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melanie Bacon', written in a cursive style.

Melanie Bacon, Chair
Board of County Commissioners

JJ/jr