

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

FROM: Heidi Eisenhour, Commissioner
Debbie Wardrop, Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission Consultant

DATE: October 16, 2023

SUBJECT: Olympic Peninsula Tourism Strategic Plan Briefing

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau, in collaboration with MMGY NextFactor and its partners, is developing a five-year Tourism Master Plan, focused on creating a more predictable year-round economy. In considering how the tourism economy could evolve on the Olympic Peninsula it's important that tourism remain a vital economic driver while also enhancing residents' quality of life.

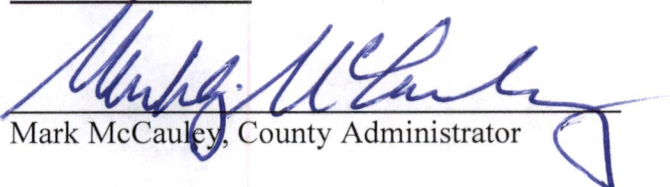
The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau is the officially recognized Destination Marketing Organization for the Olympic Peninsula and administers the Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission, a collaborative marketing partnership of the major municipalities on the Olympic Peninsula including nine funding partners representing: three counties (Clallam, Jefferson, and Mason), five cities (Clallam Bay/Seki, Forks, Port Angeles, Port Townsend and Sequim), and the Quinault and north coast beach areas of Grays Harbor County.

ANALYSIS: There has been a great deal of community engagement – including a survey with over 1,300 responses and a handful of community town halls in Jefferson and Clallam counties - giving business leaders and residents a chance to voice their ideas, and provide comments and feedback. By way of example we've included the input received at the Port Townsend Town Hall. It's not surprising that we've received many comments focusing on Fall, Winter, Spring, and mid-week promotions as well as comments emphasizing stay-cations and the negative impacts of tourism. The Olympic Peninsula Tourism Commission and MMGY have requested time to brief the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners on what has been learned thus far and receive further input from the Board.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

RECOMMENDATION: Listen, discuss and provide input.

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

10/11/23
Date

How would you describe living in the Olympic Peninsula in 1-3 words?

50 responses



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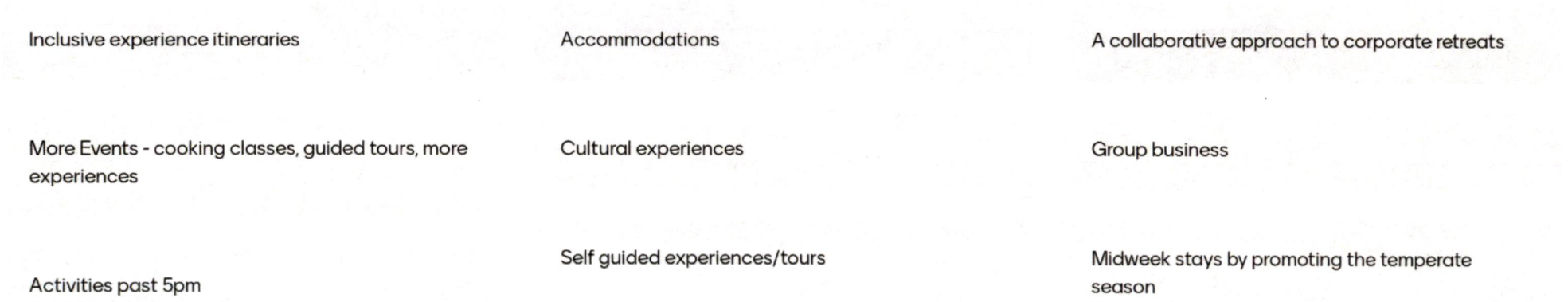


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Where do you see the greatest opportunities to grow visitor revenue in spring and fall?

35 responses



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35 responses

Identify empty winter homes	Retreats	Develop festivals and events that make sense in those seasons
Indoor amenities benefitting residents and visitors: arcade, bowling alley, roller rink	RetreatsAttitude adjustment-enjoy quiet	Better local transportation options
Surfing is a winter sport and a big draw from the city- entice that demographic to linger	Saunas	A new pool

Where do you see the greatest opportunities to grow visitor revenue in spring and fall?

35 responses

Reunions

Late night dinner options

Taxi, Uber, Lyft transport options

Cultural events

Music events

Sports bar/dining

Market more about the Rainshadow effect - much of the Peninsula receives significantly less rain than the Seattle metro area

Develop a periodic weekend/week like art walk, concerts, etc where businesses can plan longer hours

Funding to support Live Music costs

Where do you see the greatest opportunities to grow visitor revenue in spring and fall?

35 responses

Pubs that encourage families with kids	More easily available information about the town history. Interactive website on what you can find here. More maker focus. Lateer night activities places to eat, etc.	Indoor soccer arena
Indoor bouncy house gym, gymnastics facility		Venues and accommodations for corporate meetings and retreats
More technological focused jobs & schools. More live events (music especially)	Evergreen college moves to Port Townsend	
	Accommodations, activities, & later restaurant hours for younger workers to incentivize them to come to town.	

What specific messages would you like to see included in this tourism master plan?

49 responses

Collaborative minded recommendations that consider a tourism driven idea but also how our community will support that idea

Greater cohesion and collaboration between Jefferson/clallam (the entire Olympic Peninsula) as well as county/city.

United, unified messaging for tourism marketing efforts

Good exposure for areas outside the park and outside the cities.

A place to get away from the city with your team/group, experience nature and get creative, build teams ...

The Olympic peninsula is a beautiful place to connect with the outdoors via land or sea

How can tourism economy support local vibrancy and support local residents

Marine environment is sensitive and special, care for it like a local

Staycation marketing

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What specific messages would you like to see included in this tourism master plan?

49 responses

promoting tourism routes and accessibility

Work from home opportunities while on vacation
or live here

Inclusive of a more diverse group of stakeholders

In five years, the destination will have a more
balanced, year round tourism economy that
provides year round employment for local
residents.

Respect the environment and community you are
entering.

Recommended benchmarks for measuring impact
and success

Reach out to individual stakeholders for greater
representation

Revise and focus on core visitor personas: family,
foodie; romantic and soft-adventure seekers

Develop raving fans that want to return again and
again, all year long.

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What specific messages would you like to see included in this tourism master plan?

49 responses

Encourage collaboration between industries and locations across the Peninsula

The ODT connects our communities, You can bike & run across the peninsula

That Port Townsend is a great getaway without getting too far away. That Port Townsend is building to create "The Whole Package" feeling.

Recreate responsibly

Work with influencers to help push the needle

Access to both wild untouched nature and a unique historically town to enjoy

UNESCO World Heritage Site (OPN) and one of only 13 National Marine Sanctuaries.. HERE!

Representation at the state level in dollars toward tourism

Infrastructure updates are necessary and will benefit both locals and tourists

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49 responses

PT is a terrible home base for ONP unless you like traffic

There is so much variety in what a tourist can do and experience here. It is a place for everyone!

Super easy to navigate transit! (Stretch goal)

Recommendation re monument sign welcoming everyone. Ahhhhhh.

Slow down, Carpool, Be a Designated driver

More messaging on access and activities in one primary platform for visitors to easily access tourism information

Tour with a local

A more unique streamlined voice for messaging

uncrowded beaches



What specific messages would you like to see included in this tourism master plan?

49 responses

Public beaches! Few public beach access points	Messaging that defines and differentiates between the unique qualities of each town on the Olympic Peninsula	Craft destination: craft food, craft beverage and craftsmen (woodworking & wooden boatbuilding)
Peaceful	Open	Payed Back
Refreshing	amazing	Vast

What specific messages would you like to see included in this tourism master plan?

49 responses

Magical

Value

Value driven market

Off season events

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Olympic Peninsula

Tourism Master Plan

Project Update / October 2023

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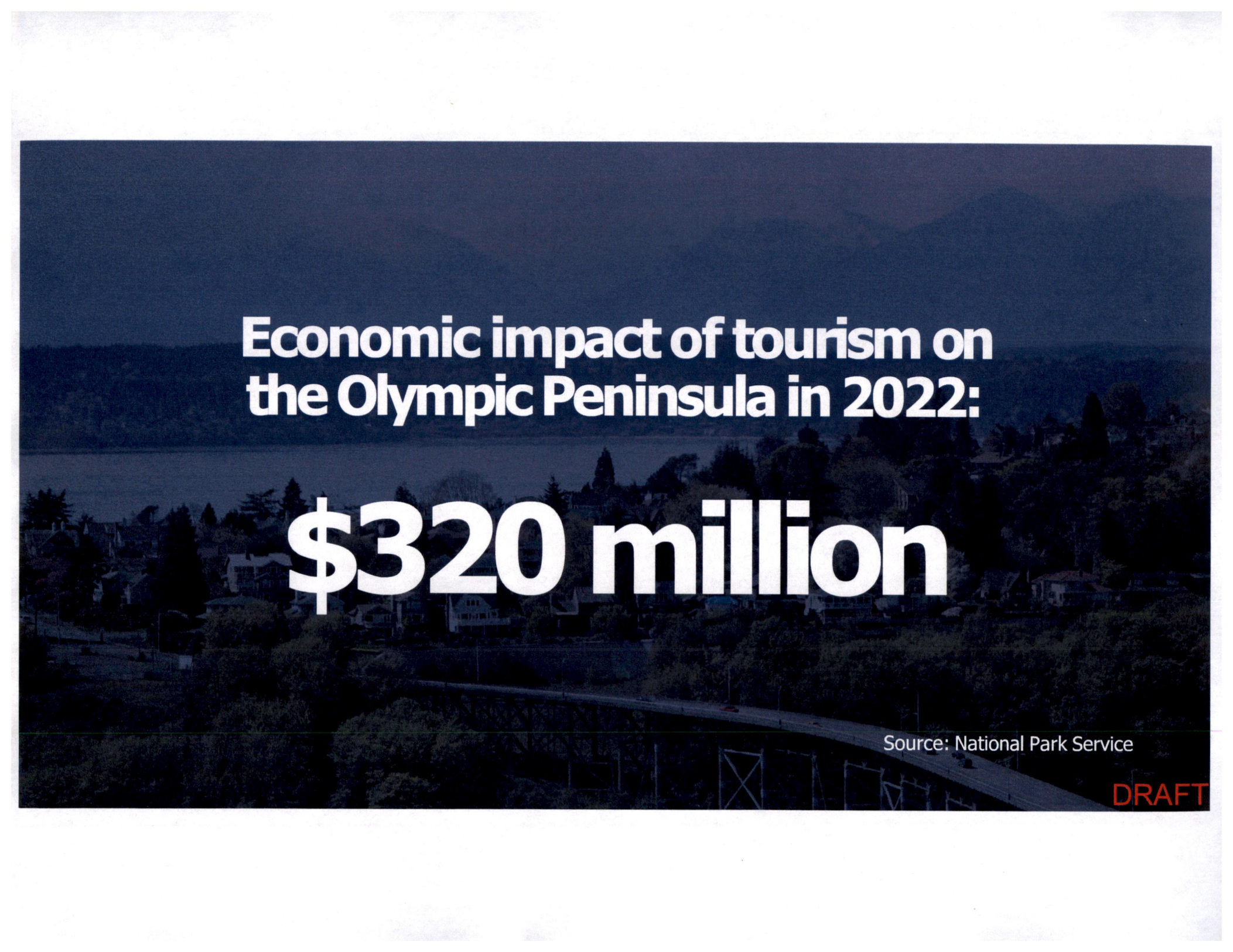
Project Purpose

Develop strategies to create a more consistent, sustainable and vibrant year-round visitor economy with an emphasis on increasing visitor spending in shoulder seasons and winter

Intended Outcomes

Increase visitor spending in shoulder/winter seasons by:

- developing visitor experiences and industry capacity (supply)
- developing more diverse/targeted seasonal promotions (demand)



**Economic impact of tourism on
the Olympic Peninsula in 2022:**

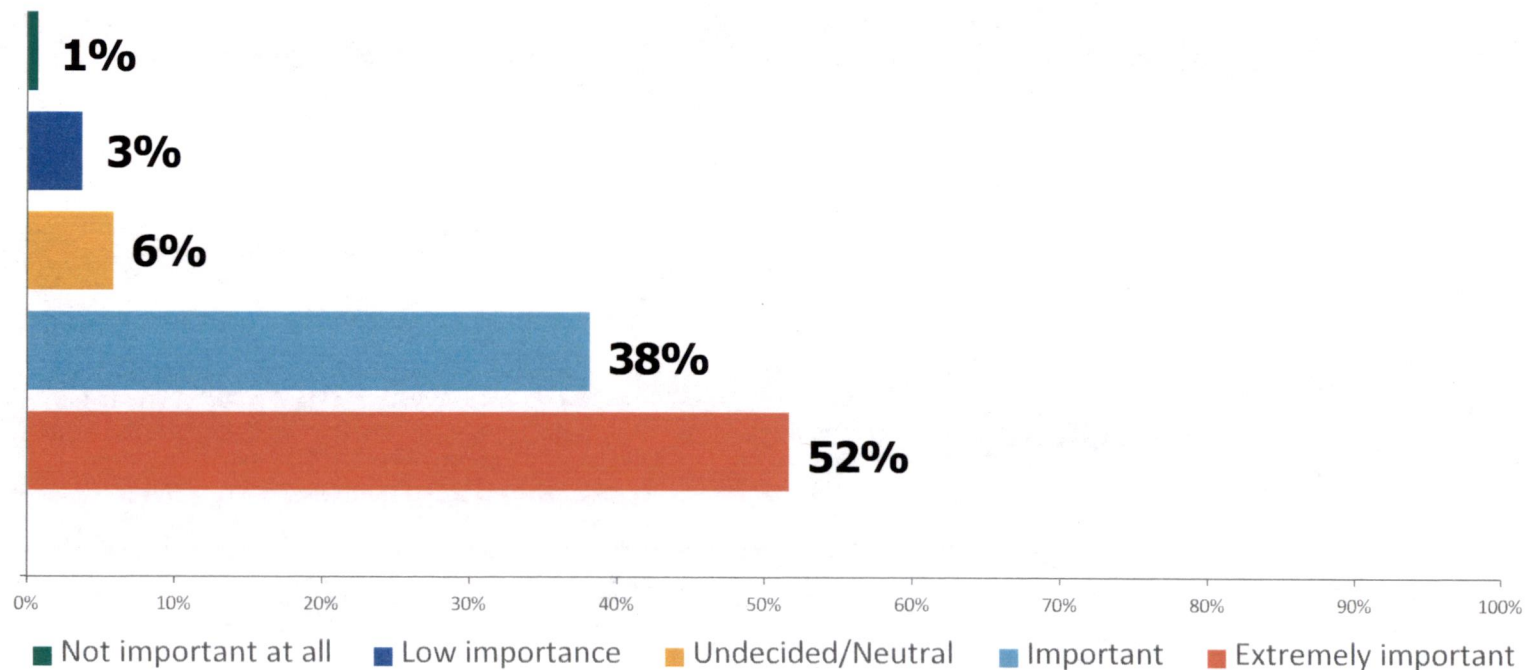
\$320 million

Source: National Park Service

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Olympic Peninsula 2023 Resident Survey (1,400+ participants)

How would you rate the importance of tourism on the Olympic Peninsula economy?



Community **Engagement**

- **10 Focus Groups with Industry & Community Stakeholders**
- **30+ Individual Interviews**
- **Resident Survey:** 1,400+ residents
- **DestinationNEXT Survey:** 168 stakeholders
- **4 Community Town Halls**
- **Visioning Workshop:** Nov. 2

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Town Hall Group Discussions

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Town Hall – Port Townsend / Fort Worden

How would you describe living in the Olympic Peninsula in 1-3 words?

50 responses



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Town Hall – Sequim

How would you describe living in the Olympic Peninsula in 1-3 words?
31 responses



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Town Hall – Port Angeles

How would you describe living in the Olympic Peninsula in 1-3 words?

93 responses



Town Hall – Forks

How would you describe living in the Olympic Peninsula in 1-3 words?

26 responses



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Strategic Framework (DRAFT)

1. **DEMAND: ENHANCE MARKETING**
Develop targeted marketing/sales to increase shoulder season and winter awareness
2. **SUPPLY: DEVELOP ASSETS & VISITOR EXPERIENCE**
Invest in responsible industry development and placemaking
3. **LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
Expand and promote networks in culinary, culture/arts, biking and other lifestyle segments
4. **PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION**
Improve community and industry alignment regarding infrastructure development



Thank You

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