

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

WORKSHOP AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Mark McCauley, County Administrator

DATE: March 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Workshop: Discuss the Tourism Coordinating Council Proposal for Managing the Gateway Visitor Center

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: The Gateway Visitor Center has been managed for a number of years through an arrangement with the Jefferson County Historical Society using funds provided through grants from the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee. On October 24, 2022 the County was informed by the Historical Society Executive Director that the Historical Society had decided to transition away from managing the Gateway Visitor Center.

In response the County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for managing the Gateway Visitor Center. The County received one response from the Tourism Coordinating Council (TCC), attached.

ANALYSIS: TCC's proposal went well beyond what the RFP solicited which was intended to continue operating the Gateway Visitor Center in generally the same way it had been operated in past years. TCC's proposal proposes three phases:

1. Phase 1: transition – mostly status quo using existing budget allocation
2. Phase 2: ramp up the operation – double staff hours – double the operating budget – substantial capital investment by the County
3. Phase 3: move the Visitor Center to the County land across Hwy 19 and dramatically increase amenities

Questions for the Board to consider:

- Does the County need to continue staffing a visitor center?
- Should it accept the TCC proposal or a variation thereof?

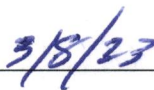
FISCAL IMPACT: This request has no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of County Commissioners discuss whether the County needs to continue funding a visitor center and if it does it should discuss the TCC proposal and give staff direction regarding next steps

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

Date



TCC – Tourism Coordinating Council of Jefferson County, WA

Council Members –

Diana Smeland, TCC Chair-
Resort at Port Ludlow

Bill Roney, TCC Past Chair
Olympic Peninsula Gateway
VIC

Cleone Telling,
Worthington Park, Quilcene

Dan Ventura,
Cove RV, Brinnon

Amy Neil - Kalaloch Resort

Marsha Massey,
Olympic Peninsula Tourism
Commission

Aaron Terada,
Fort Flagler State Park

Crystie Kisler, Finnriver

Bethany Smith,
Old Alcohol Plant & Inn

Heidi Eisenhour,
Commissioner to TCC

Marketing Coordinator

Steve Shively, S3 Solutions

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP 1-10) Jefferson County Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Center Jefferson County, Washington

Proposers shall submit completed proposals in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with "Proposal for Jefferson County Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Center" and the name of the applicant submitting the proposal. An original copy and digital PDF must be received by the County no later than 4:30 p.m. PST on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at the following address:

Mark McCauley
Jefferson County Administrator
1820 Jefferson Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368

An original copy of our RFP is enclosed, and a digital PDF file of same has been emailed to:

Mark McCauley mmccauley@co.jefferson.wa.us, and

Adiel McKnight AFMcKnight@co.jefferson.wa.us

Thank you!

TCC

2023 E. Sims Way - #308
Port Townsend, WA 98368

p. 360-440-7006 | f. 360-912-8352

e.

tcc@enjoyolympicpeninsula.com

www.EnjoyOlympicPeninsula.com



Enjoy Olympic Peninsula

Enc.: /TCC Gateway VIC RFP reply v02042023

The Tourism Coordinating Council (TCC) RFP (#1-10) reply regarding management
of the Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Information Center (VIC),
Jefferson County, Washington

I. SUMMARY

The Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Information Center (VIC) is of great importance to the complete and comprehensive tourism marketing and promotion of the entire Olympic Peninsula.

Jefferson County Tourism Coordinating Council (TCC) believes that the VIC's continued operations are essential in supporting all business in Jefferson County and across the north Olympic Peninsula. Therefore, TCC is pleased to offer a responsive proposal for both the transitional management, and the ongoing operational development of the VIC on behalf of both Jefferson County and all tourism marketing and promotion partners around the Olympic Peninsula.

TCC is uniquely qualified to fulfill this critical task, and has assembled an exceptionally qualified team of existing VIC, JCHS (Jefferson County Historical Society), and TCC leadership to facilitate the required outcomes of this proposal.

At our core TCC is comprised of the BoCC's (Jefferson County Board of Commissioners), appointed "best and brightest" involved throughout every sector of Jefferson County tourism and hospitality. Each council member is actively involved in many facets of local, state, and federal tourism and economic development efforts. We are happy to provide specific industry references as needed.

TCC was formed to promote the tourism industry in the unincorporated areas of Jefferson County, in accordance with BoCC, under Resolution number 78-03, dated December 8, 2003. TCC's BoCC appointed Council represents the entirety of Jefferson County, from Kalaloch and Fork's West End, to the Hood Canal communities of Brinnon and Quilcene, to Marrowstone Island, Port Ludlow, Chimacum and the Tri-Areas. TCC is a key strategic partner with OPTC (Olympic Peninsula Tourism Coordinating Commission), the officially recognized DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) for our whole Peninsula. Our proposal for VIC operations is not limited to geography nor civic or business membership practices. Rather our proposal seeks to leverage the VIC's critical location as the true "Gateway" to the North Olympic Peninsula, building upon TCC's two-decades of collaborative leadership and passion for inviting visitors to enjoy all the high value destinations and authentic experiences awaiting exploration!

The management transition of the VIC from the years of good stewardship under the Jefferson Historical Society (JCHS) comes at an interesting time of both leadership and infrastructure changes. Our proposal addresses the need to "think outside the box" regarding leadership and staffing of the VIC, as well as recommend proactive leveraging of the state and federal construction programs transforming the SR 104 & SR 19 intersection into the optimal location for the long envisioned – full-service – "Olympic Peninsula Gateway Welcome Center" VIC facility.

Our proposal recommends the strategic development of a dedicated VIC enterprise, most logically organizing as an independent non-profit. TCC presently contracts with a number of vendors for fulfillment of their Jefferson County marketing and tourism promotions. From digital, print and broadcast media vendors, to contract service agreements with production and management vendors. The proposed VIC operations organization will be another service provider, continuing accountability – inclusive of

documented Jeff. Co. fiscal and analytics requirements through - maintenance of a BoCC appointed seat on TCC.

Our proposal addresses a multi phased timeline, detailing milestones from an anticipated Spring 2023 initial start, through the complete JCHS transition during the remainder of 2023, and onto a sustainable – and visionary - operations phases for 2024 and beyond.

II. BACKGROUND & CAPACITY

Jefferson County (population approximately 31,000) is located on the Olympic Peninsula, in western Washington State. The county seat is located in Port Townsend in the historic county courthouse. It is largely a rural county with tourism, forestry, agriculture, local government, a paper mill and the maritime industry being the principal drivers of its economy.

The Olympic Peninsula, as a regional tourist destination, is located west of Seattle and the I-5 corridor gateway defined as north from Vancouver, BC south to Portland, OR. The Olympic National Park, designated an UNESCO World Heritage Site and International Biosphere Reserve, is the heart of the Olympic Peninsula, defining its geographic area in concert with the Olympic National Forest. It is bordered by the Pacific Ocean on the west, the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the north, the Hood Canal on the east, and Westport/Oceans Shores on the south. It includes Clallam, Jefferson, Mason and Grays Harbor counties.

The ONP (Olympic National Park), the sixth largest national park in the continental United States and consistently in the top ten of most visited of all national parks, is by far the most important tourism driver on the Olympic Peninsula. Encompassing nearly a million acres – almost exclusively within Jefferson County - and the only temperate rainforest in the United States, the park includes a vast wilderness, thousands of years of human history, and several distinctly different ecosystems, including glacier-capped mountains, old-growth forests, and over 135 miles of wild coastline protected within the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary as one of 15 marine sanctuaries administered by NOAA. Olympic is one of the few national parks that doesn't have a road traveling through its center, the park is further surrounded by the Olympic National Forest, as well as other public recreational lands. Pre-COVID, annual recreational visitation to the Olympic National Park regularly exceeded three million people. (In 2021, ONP recorded 2.72 million visitors). Key towns around the Olympic Peninsula include:

- Forks (pop. 3,295) – Clallam County
- Port Angeles (pop. 20,144) – Clallam County
- Sequim (pop. 8,308) – Clallam County
- Port Townsend (pop. 10,356) – Jefferson County
- Shelton (pop. 10,479) – Mason County
- Ocean Shores (pop. 7,114), Aberdeen (pop. 17,191) and Hoquiam (pop. 8,860) (Grays Harbor County)

Additionally, eight Federally recognized tribes continue to recognize a relationship to the national park based on traditional use, origin, beliefs and practices. These tribes are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| • The Lower Elwha Klallam | • Quinault |
| • Jamestown S'Klallam | • Hoh |
| • Port Gamble S'Klallam | • Quileute |
| • Skokomish | • Makah |

It was the ancestors of these tribes that lived throughout the Olympic Peninsula and ceded their lands and waters to the Federal government through treaties in 1855 and 1856. Citizens of these tribes now live on land along the shores of the peninsula.

Port Angeles, to the north of the park, is home to the 100+ years-old Black Ball Ferry Line which crosses the Strait of Juan de Fuca to Victoria, Canada daily. This is the Western-most Canadian border crossing in the United States. The economic impact from this ferry route on the Olympic Peninsula is over \$60M annually and carries 472,000 passengers/128,000 vehicles. (2018).

According to research commissioned by the State of Washington Tourism office and delivered by Tourism Economics:

- Visitor spending in 2021 on the Olympic Peninsula (as represented by all four counties) exceeded \$886 million,
- State and local taxes generated by that visitor spending totaled \$71.8 million,
- There were a combined 6,427 jobs in the region supported by tourism,
- This generated \$195.4 million in labor income.

Visitor Centers with strong local knowledge are mediators between web information and providing personalization for visitors whose information needs cannot be fully met through an online search.

The time we have to connect with visitors is limited. Accurate, confident, and welcoming information is the added value a VIC brings to transforming a standard visit into an amazing experience. Services at VICs include the following:

- Travel guides, maps and printed pieces available for tourism partners and visitors,
- Front line staff offering concierge and booking support for providers and visitors,
- Hosts, Local guides and ambassadors,
- Phone support, web and mail support,
- Updated information, trip follow-up methods,
- Experiences through interpretive displays.

Models show that regional Visitor Information Centers providing “a reason to stop” beyond the bathrooms are not only successful but also financially autonomous. We feel that our vision for the Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Center can elevated this currently valuable asset to these heightened levels of operational success and service.

III. ALIGNMENT

TCC’s objectives and goals correspond well with the mission of the Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitors Center based on the services the VIC provides to our visitors. This connection is interwoven throughout both of our programs and is only strengthened by the long-tenured manager of Gateway VIC who has also been instrumental in the operations of TCC as its Chair.

Fulfilling County Ordinance 02-0622-98, Jefferson County TCC is the sole, year-round, tourism promoter utilizing Lodging Tax revenues to strategically and singularly target regional and global tourism promotions on behalf of the entire County. TCC’s operations are solely focused on the development, maintenance, and dedicated operations of Jefferson County’s only tourism marketing and promotional entity not conditionally limited by membership status. The Jefferson County BoCC appoints the TCC representative council of tourism professionals and dedicated volunteers, currently consisting of (2023 roster follows):

Port Ludlow – Discovery Bay, Gardiner

Port Ludlow – Diana Smeland TCC Chair- alt. Dan Ratigan
70 Breaker Ln, Port Ludlow, WA 98365

Gateway VIC – TCC Past Chair – Bill Roney - alt. Shelly Leavens
93 Beaver Valley Rd, Port Ludlow, WA 98365

Quilcene – Brinnon – Hood Canal

Quilcene – Coyle – Cleone Telling - alt. Brian Cullin - alt. Kevin Wooley
181 Leland Valley Rd E, Quilcene, WA, 98376

Brinnon & Hood Canal – Dan Ventura – alt. - Christina Maloney
303075 US Highway 101 Brinnon, WA 98320

West End

Kalaloch – West end – Amy Neil
157151 US-101, Forks, WA 98331

Forks – Marsha Massey – alt. Lissy Andros
618 S Peabody St Suite F, Port Angeles, WA 98362

Tri-Area – Chimacum Valley & Marrowstone Island

Fort Flager & Marrowstone Is. – Aaron Terada – alt. Andrew Nordstrom
10541 Flagler Rd, Nordland, WA 98358

Chimacum – Crystie Kisler, alt. Bethany Smith
124 Center Rd, Chimacum, WA 98325

BoCC Staff to TCC

Commissioner Heidi Eisenhour, past Commissioner Greg Brotherton

Contract Marketing Coordinator

Steve Shively – S3 Solutions
2023 E. Sims Way, #308, Port Townsend, WA 98368 Phone 360.440.7006

TCC VIC special committee – formed, on December 20, 2022, per TCC Bylaws, to research and develop Gateway VIC RFP reply for TCC. Consisting of TCC Members: Bill Roney, Crystie Kisler, Bethany Smith, Steve Shively, with JCHS/OPGVC Members: Tim Caldwell, Tim Rensema'. Content for this RFP response approved as to form by TCC on January 10, 2023.

IV. APPROACH

Our proposal comprises a three phased approach. It covers the initial transitional 2023 year; the second-phase “learning to walk” independently 2024-2026; and the third-visionary-phase of “taking flight” addressing the VIC’s aspirational future and potential growth.

PHASE 1 – Transitional 2023

Our goal remains: *“The Olympic Peninsula Gateway Visitor Center's mission is to provide helpful, requested, information to any traveler arriving in Jefferson County and the Olympic Peninsula. The Gateway employs face to face contact to highlight all facets of vacation related interests with a focus on accommodations, Olympic Coast Cuisine, activities, and resources to visitor's questions aiding in promoting comfortable, memorable, longer stays in our Region.”*

Timeline tasks identified within this critical phase include:

- Operations orientation and transitional partnership with JCHS,
- Staff and Volunteer management – develop Travel Counselors,
- Organizational development of independent VIC Board of Directors,

- Onboarding with current facilities management & equipment systems,
- Responsive Visitor services – esp. in light of WSDOT SR 104 & 19 roundabout and Swansonville Rd. construction detours and closures,
- Financial management – including retention of JCHS’s successful LARP Bookkeeping services,
- Maintain Marketing & Promotions – including retention of VIC’s contracted marketing services,
- Grow community relations.

Proposed Key Staff for this TCC VIC operations include:

- Bill Roney – Gateway VIC Manager, 2007-present,
- Liz Arp – Gateway VIC bookkeeper, 2021-present
- Tim Resema – Gateway VIC lead volunteer, 2014-present,
- Tim Caldwell – JCHS board - VIC liaison, 2019-present,
- Steve Shively – project manager, TCC contract marketing coordinator, 2013-present.

Recommend adopting current 2023 VIC budget approved on behalf of JCHS by LTAC for 2023.

Expense	Annual
Utilities	6,550
Labor/tax (Manager + Vol. develop.)	67,000
Maintenance/grounds/Insurance	10,000
Office/ VIC supplies & marketing	8,450
Total	\$92,000

OPPORTUNITY – In February 2023, proposals for federal RAISE grant through the Department of Transportation as well as Jefferson Co. unallocated County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grants are due. These grants are investments in receiving unallocated Federal COVID-19 and American Rescue Plan Act infrastructure that will have a significant local or regional impact. The VIC could apply for a grant to move the facility onto the county land across SR 19 where site plans and improved infrastructure exists. These grants, combined with a financial support agreement with the WSDOT for roundabout work, would be a huge benefit towards funding the VIC’s full potential. However, time is of the essence.

In anticipation of being awarded the opportunity to operate the VIC, TCC on behalf of the VIC, will submit a conditional Jefferson Co. ARPA grant proposal in advance of the February 10 deadline.

PHASE 2 – 2024-2026 “learning to walk” independently. Timeline tasks include:

- Advocate and facilitate the enactment of TCC tourism promotion,
- Market JeffCo. anew as a SMERF (comprised of Social, Military, Education, Religious, and Fraternal groups) - think weddings and family reunions - meeting/event destination,
- Support OPTC Sales missions, trade shows and FAM’s,
- Collaboratively participate in TCC and OPTC,
- Provide hospitality educational forums/seminars (e.g. preparing bids to lodging catering and service providers, promote hospitality within community),

- Develop tourism referral network,
- Produce and distribute 35-50K JeffCo. Activity Planners,
- Operate a retail center within the Visitor Center selling maps, NW Forest Passes, WSPRC Discovery Pass, hiking guide, books and local publications.,
- Maintain visitor counts, business referrals, overnight stays and bulk brochure requests,
- Improve Signage – both SR104 & SR19 post roundabout construction and digital kiosk at VIC.

Staffing. Full Time VIC Manager – focus:

- i. Development of volunteer and staff services,
- ii. Maintain VIC content and infrastructure,
- iii. Design merchandising and new location campaign,
- iv. Facilitate VIC Board operations and development.

It will be recommended that VIC continue operations six days per week, 312 days per year, two three-hour shifts per day for the entire year except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. The only proposed change will be through the capacity building of having the Manager become a full-time paid position, and addition of Part-time staffing.

ANTICIPATED BUDGET – initially - sought for 2024 financial year (based upon preliminary business plan and current costs of services):

Expense	Annual
Utilities	14,500
Labor/tax (FT manager +1 or 2 PT)	115,000
Insurance (including event/grounds)	15,000
Janitorial	9,600
Maintenance/grounds	18,000
Office/ VIC supplies & marketing	12,000
Total	\$184,100

Actual 2024 proposed budget and annual budgets for 2025 and beyond will be reflective of lessons learned and actual operations history in tune with annual LTAC request for funding proposals and allocations.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT VIC LOCATION

Our initial research in preparation of this RFP response shows that the physical site of current Gateway VIC lies on land leased to Jefferson County by Rayonier Inc. The site is approximately 150 by 100 feet and the structure is about 20 by 40 feet. The site is sufficient for three portable toilets, a trash dumpster, a harvester artifact, and parking in support of the VIC building. It is located approximately 150 feet from the

intersection of 104 and 19, and is utilized by Jefferson Transit and numerous commercial carriers, and is recognized by WSDOT as a Park and Ride site.

1. Impacts of the installation of the roundabout: The roundabout in Port Townsend are about 30 meters in width (or 100 feet). This would require the roundabout to come fifty feet up toward the VIC site. Therefore, unless the Hwy 104-SR19 roundabout is of a larger diameter than 30 meters, the VIC would not be impacted. (Steve Roark, WSDOT's Region Administrator Olympic Region, has verified this.)
2. Improvements that should be made to the current facility, include:
 - a. The log siding is rotting in places up to two feet long. These should be excised and filled with like material or at least something to look like it. The whole structure should be looked at for possible rot.
 - b. Replacement of the portable toilets with two unisex vault toilets attached to the south end of the building. Cost 100-150K\$- this estimate is based on a contract done in 2013 and taken as a percentage of installing one (at 90K) to six at 180K.
 - c. Completely rebuilding the parking lot down to base. Recommend that half of the parking lot be environmentally friendly paving stones so water goes through but you still have a drivable surface. The other half should be environmentally friendly asphalt material (allows water to pass through). Pervious pavements (allowing infiltration) consist of porous asphalt and pervious concrete and pavers. Because an infiltration rate of .5 inches per hour, a medium to low traffic use, and no heavy equipment, perhaps only half the parking lot could be changed to permeable pavement. The remainder should be concrete or asphalt or leave it as properly installed gravel (with a new base layer of larger gravel). The costs checked for permeable pavers was \$11.35/sf. This included all labor and materials. The parking lot size is about 12,500 sf so if we assume the cost for the gravel portion would not exceed that of the pavers (a reasonable assumption) the total cost of complete reconstruction of the parking lot is estimated at \$141,875.

PROPOSED EXPANDED STAFFING service, for two reasons.

- a. Budgetary savings of utilizing volunteers supplemented by paid staff
- b. Training and orientation volunteers produce dividends of additional community advocates for the value of tourism. Studies show that educated community members are essential for sustainable regional tourism offerings and growth.

The aspirational appeal of imaging a future VIC as a true "Gateway" or "Welcome Center" for the Olympic Peninsula with partnership from Clallam Co., Mason Co. Kitsap Co., Tribes, the ODT (Olympic Discovery Trail) and our other state, federal and local recreation and natural resource partners – likened to the Ranger Station at REI, the National Elk Refuge & Greater Yellowstone Visitor Center and Wenatchee Visitor Center Tasting Room models are envisioned by TCC.

Potential VIC partners to explore collaborative funding and long-term VIC staffing partnerships within this future "Gateway Welcome Center" include: NPS, OPNMS, NFS, WSPRC and other regional/federal natural resource agencies, e.g. OCL (Olympic Culinary Loop), Tribes, Winery and Cider Assoc., transit, ODT (Olympic Discovery Trail), REI and other commercial retailers/outfitters, area Chambers, Community partners: i.e. Port Ludlow Village, Pleasant Harbor, Worthington Park, Fort Worden PDA, School of Wooden Boat Building and artisan trades, Chimacum Tech Education/Peninsula College, Bayside Housing, Centrum and community arts, JCHS and interpret sites, Clallam and Mason Co. Tourism/OPTC, etc.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER STAFFING POSSIBILITIES – In addition to ongoing volunteer recruitment, education, retention and celebration, the following additional partner organizations have been identified:

- United Way Volunteer Expo,
- RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program),
- WorkKamper,
- Chimacum high school CTE education / Peninsula College hospitality programs,
- Wenatchee's Recreation Ambassador Program has a successful proof of concept on their trails and rivers, and has studied expanding the program as a potentially powerful solution for helping develop and maintain quality volunteers in Leavenworth VIC's. The Gateway VIC could model the multi-benefits of this Recreation Ambassador's program.

PHASE 3 ENVISION years 2026 and beyond. The visionary-phase of "taking flight" addressing the VIC's sustainable, aspirational future, and potential growth.

Timeline tasks currently identified include:

- VIC organizational capacity developed, most likely as an independent 501c3 non-profit,
- Scope and feasibility for VIC facilities relocation have been assessed,
- Design, funding and building towards the VIC's new location and new potential has been undertaken.

RATIONAL - Visitor Centers located at "end destinations" (e.g. Hurricane Ridge, Heart O' the Hills Information/Ranger Station - Port Angeles, Hoh Rain Forest Visitor Center - Forks, or Hoodspout Visitor Information Center) are all located in highly visible, high traffic "end" destination areas. Bringing high impact for visitors who have already traveled to those immediate areas of specific value.

A "Welcome or "Gateway" center informs and inspires different markets than those of "end destination" VICs. **Gateway Welcome VIC's are typically:**

- Located on major through-way entry points, in this case west of the Hood Canal Bridge on SR 104. The Gateway VIC's "Welcome Center" design provides visitors with the Olympic Peninsula's first impression. The appearance and overall experience should reflect our destination's brand and character.
- The national 3,700 mile Great American Rail-Trail will travel from Washington DC to Washington State, through Western Washington's Kitsap Co. and onto the ODT (Olympic Discovery Trail) out to the Pacific coast. The Olympic Peninsula "Gateway" VIC is well positioned to welcome trail users from near and far.
- Research* reveals that top reasons to frequent VICs are to use restroom facilities followed by obtaining brochures and local maps, stretch legs, walk pets, and to purchase refreshments, local items and picnic.
- VICs that reflect regional heritage and culture through architecture and rotating displays become visitor "attractions" in their own right.

According to a Dean Runyan study* travelers who stopped at Oregon's eight gateway welcome centers demonstrate greater engagement by utilizing in-person services and considering recommendations from the welcome center staff. This engagement shows in the average spending as well. According to the report, on average, visitors to welcome centers spend 68% more on their trip in the state than other types of visitors. (Source: * *Travel Oregon Welcome Centers "VISITOR SPENDING CALENDAR YEAR 2019" (July 2020)*)

TCC's Phase 3 goal is that the Welcome / Gateway VIC will grow in demand to 363 days of scheduled operations. It is understood that the property across SR 19 (15 acres) is owned by Jefferson County. It has a well already installed and reportedly a perk test has passed for septic installation. It was discussed in the past to install the Visitors Center on Jefferson County property. A draft site plan was completed for the County in February 2003 by SvR Design, who has since merged with Moore Iacofano Goltsman, Inc. (MIG).

This plan incorporates Site programming amenities of: Visitor and staff parking, transit, commercial and RV camping, trails, amphitheater, interpretive kiosks and waysides. Public restrooms, Lobby, Information and exhibit areas, Classrooms, Administration, Sales (gift shop, food services), building mechanical, electrical, security and IT.

Potential alternative funding sources to explore for partnership in development of a new VIC include:

- Direct Appropriation
- Rural Mobility Transportation Grant
- OZ – Qualified Opportunity Zone investment funding
- LTAC
- Tourism Promotion Areas (TPA)
- P3 (PPP or Public-Private Partnership)
- Scenic Byway Grant,
- Foundations and regional funding

V. **CONCLUSION –**

- ✓ The Gateway VIC is far too vital of a component in the successful Jefferson County tourism mechanism to lose.
- ✓ TCC operates, on behalf of the entire County, a singularly focused year-round tourism marketing and promotional entity which is not limited by membership status. It's BoCC appointed representative council consists of tourism professionals from every corner of the County.
- ✓ TCC has a current and future plan for operating the VIC in a way that will produce the best outcomes for all.
- ✓ TCC leverages the VIC's value as an integral part of its current tourism promotion and fulfillment of visitor satisfaction.
- ✓ TCC proposes to come along side JCHS for the remainder of 2023 as it orients itself to VIC operations and establishes the most appropriate organization for sustainable operations in 2024 and beyond.
- ✓ The Olympic Peninsula Gateway VIC currently extends hospitality in the form of information and regular emergency / incidental aid to our valued visitors.
- ✓ TCC envisions the enormous potential of a regional Gateway / Welcome Center, and encourages strategic leadership to maximize potential that upcoming WSDOT roundabout construction, and available regional and federal funding might provide for the future.
- ✓ If selected the TCC supported operations of the Olympic Peninsula Gateway VIC will strive to provide these leadership elements.

Thank you for your consideration.

TCC VIC special committee - Bill Roney, Crystie Kisler, Bethany Smith, Steve Shively, Tim Caldwell, Tim Rensema'. Content of this RFP response unanimously approved as to form by TCC, January 10, 2023.