



AGENDA
DES MOINES LODGING TAX COMMITTEE
MEETING
Zoom
Wednesday, September 2, 2026 - 4:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AGENDA ITEMS

- Item 1. **DISCUSS/APPROVE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING**
Motion:

ADJOURNMENT

**Lodging Tax Committee
AGENDA ITEM**

**BUSINESS OF THE LODGING TAX COMMITTEE
City of Des Moines, WA**

SUBJECT: DISCUSS/APPROVE APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Oktoberfest Brews Cruise LTAC Application

FOR AGENDA OF:

September 2, 2026

DEPT OF ORIGIN:

Administration

DATE SUBMITTED:

CLEARANCES:

Purpose and Recommendation

Motion:

Strategic Plan Priority

Background

Discussion

Alternatives

Financial Impact

Recommendation



Des Moines Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 98324
Des Moines WA 98198
206-251-2719

Aug 5, 2026

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
City of Des Moines
21630 11th Ave S
Des Moines, WA 98198

Subject: Lodging Tax Grant Application – Des Moines Marina Sunset Cruise Series

Dear Members of the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee,

On behalf of the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, we are pleased to submit our application for the *Oktoberfest Brews Cruise* as a pilot for the *Des Moines Marina Sunset Cruise Series*. Operating directly out of our marina and in partnership with the well-established Argosy Cruise Line, this series captures the stunning beauty of Puget Sound sunsets to draw visitors from across the region. By showcasing our shoreline from the water, we offer regional travelers an irresistible new reason to visit and explore Des Moines.

To maximize tourism impact, these cruise excursions will be paired with some of our major celebrations, such as Men In Black, the Waterland Festival, and Oktoberfest. Packaging these vibrant evening cruises alongside local accommodation deals will turn single-day eventgoers into overnight guests; increasing hotel stays, boosting evening dining, and strengthening our local lodging tax base.

We appreciate your consideration of our proposal and look forward to partnering with the City to elevate our visitor economy and showcase the very best of Des Moines.

Sincerely,
Traci Buxton
President, Des Moines Chamber of Commerce
President@desmoineswachamber.org
206-251-2719

2026 Application for Des Moines Lodging Tax Funds

Amount of Lodging Tax Requested: \$ 7,734.87

Organization/Agency Name: Des Moines Chamber of Commerce			
Federal Tax ID Number: 41-3209578			
Event or Activity Name (if applicable): Oktoberfest Brews Cruise			
Contact Name and Title: Traci Buxton, President			
Mailing Address: PO Box 98372	City: Des Moines	State: WA	ZIP: 98198
Phone: 206-251-2719	Email Address: president@desmionewac hamber.org		
☒ Non-Profit ☐ For-Profit ☐ Public Agency			

CERTIFICATION

I am an authorized agent of the organization/agency applying for funding. I understand that:

- I am proposing a tourism-related service. If awarded, my organization intends to enter into a Municipal Services Contract with the City.
- The City of Des Moines will only reimburse those costs actually incurred by my organization/agency and only after the service is rendered, paid for if provided by a third party, and a signed Request for Reimbursement form (or other form acceptable to the City) has been submitted to the City, including copies of invoices and payment documentation.
- Funds must be expended within the calendar year.
- Reporting requirements meeting state guidelines outlined in this application must be submitted with final request for reimbursement.

Signature: <i>Traci Buxton</i>	Date: 7-24-26
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Application Overview

Provide us with an overview of your request:

Attach:

1. Description and itemized budget showing how you intend to use the amount requested from the City of Des Moines (income and expenses). - **Addendum #2**
2. If your agency is a non-profit a copy of your agency's current non-profit corporate registration with the Washington Secretary of State. - **Addendum #3**
3. A copy of your organization's business plan **Addendum #4** (please limit to not more than two pages) and annual budget. - **Addendum #5**
4. Brochures or other information about your event/activity/facility, in particular items showing recent tourism promotion efforts. (Optional) **Addendum #6**

This proposal and all documents filed with the City are public records. The City may choose to post on its website copies of the proposals and attached documents.

Tell us who you expect to attract:

We will be supported by Explore Seattle Southside through their non-paid channels and have agreed to partner with South King Media and the existing Oktoberfest Committee. We expect to attract businesses and residents from the Des Moines community as well as a significant number of people and businesses from outside our City boundaries, including; Normandy Park, Burien, Sea Tac, Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, and Federal Way.

The State of Washington requires an estimate for the following questions below:

As a direct result of your proposed tourism-related service, provide an estimate of:		What method was used to determine attendance in previous years?
a. Overall Attendance Enter the total number of people predicted to attend this activity, and select the method used to determine the attendance.	Predicted: 400 Capacity of the Vessel Based on success of Historical Society event	X ☐ NA - this year: Direct Count ☐ Indirect Count ☐ Representative Survey ☐ X Informal Survey ☐ Structured Estimate
b. Attendance, 50+ Miles Enter the number of people who traveled greater than 50 miles predicted to attend this activity, and select the method used to determine the attendance.	Predicted: 20 As estimated by ESS	X ☐ NA - this year: Direct Count ☐ Indirect Count ☐ Representative Survey ☐ X Informal Survey ☐ Structured Estimate
c. Attendance, Out of State, Out of Country Enter the number of people from outside the state and country predicted to attend this activity, and select the method used to determine the attendance.	Predicted: 10 As estimated by ESS	X ☐ NA - this year: Direct Count ☐ Indirect Count ☐ Representative Survey ☐ X Informal Survey ☐ Structured Estimate

d. Attendance, Paid for Overnight Lodging Enter the number of predicted to attend this activity and pay for overnight lodging, and select the method used to determine the attendance.	Predicted: 2 As estimated by ESS	☒ NA - this year: Direct Count ☐ Indirect Count ☐ Representative Survey ☐ X Informal Survey ☐ Structured Estimate
e. Attendance, Did Not Pay for Overnight Lodging Enter the number of predicted to attend this activity without paying for overnight lodging, and select the method used to determine the attendance.	Predicted: 398 As estimated by ESS	☐ NA - this year: Direct Count ☐ Indirect Count ☐ Representative Survey ☐ Informal Survey ☒ Structured Estimate

Methods

Direct Count: Actual count of visitors using methods such as paid admissions or registrations, clicker counts at entry points, vehicle counts or number of chairs filled. A direct count may also include information collected directly from businesses, such as hotels, restaurants or tour guides, likely to be affected by an event.

Indirect Count: Estimate based on information related to the number of visitors such as raffle tickets sold, redeemed discount certificates, brochures handed out, police requirements for crowd control or visual estimates.

Representative Survey: Information collected directly from individual visitors/participants. A representative survey is a highly structured data collection tool, based on a defined random sample of participants, and the results can be reliably projected to the entire population attending an event and includes margin of error and confidence level.

Informal Survey: Information collected directly from individual visitors or participants in a non-random manner that is not representative of all visitors or participants. Informal survey results cannot be projected to the entire visitor population and provide a limited indicator of attendance because not all participants had an equal chance of being included in the survey.

Structured Estimate: Estimate produced by computing known information related to the event or location. For example, one jurisdiction estimated attendance by dividing the square footage of the event area by the international building code allowance for persons (3 square feet).

Actual data will be required with your final reimbursement.

Application Submittal

Submit a PDF or one original signed copy to:

City of Des Moines Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
c/o Ed Armijo
21630 11th Ave S., Suite A
Des Moines, WA 98198
Email: EArmijo@desmoineswa.gov

You must complete and sign the cover sheet with this packet

- ⇒ **You may use the Supplemental Form or type the questions and answers on separate sheets of paper.**
- ⇒ **Please number each page in your packet, except for the optional brochures/information**

General Information

City of Des Moines Lodging Tax Fund Overview

The City's Lodging Tax Fund is the primary source of City funding for activities, operations, and expenditures designed to increase tourism. In any given year, the City may maintain a reserve in the Fund, and will assess on an annual basis how much of the fund to appropriate in a given year.

The Des Moines City Council has created a Lodging Tax Advisory Committee to conduct an annual process to solicit and recommend Lodging Tax funded services for City Council consideration.

HIGH PRIORITY will be given to tourism activities that:

- Have a demonstrated potential or high potential from the Committee's perspective to result in overnight stays by tourists in lodging establishments within the City of Des Moines.
- Promote Des Moines and/or events, activities, and places in the City to potential tourists from outside King County.
- Have demonstrated or high potential from the Committee's perspective to result in documented economic benefit to Des Moines.
- Have a demonstrated history or success in Des Moines, or are proposed by a group with a demonstrated history or high potential of success with similar activities.
- Minimize duplication of services where appropriate and encourage cooperative marketing and/or includes an element of cooperation or partnership.
- Provide, maintain, operate or enhance City-owned tourism facilities or infrastructure.

State Law Excerpts

RCW 67.28.1816 – Use of Lodging Tax Fund.

Lodging tax revenue under this chapter 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) or the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended.

RCW 67.28.080 – Definitions.

- "Municipality" means any county, city or town of the state of Washington.
- "Operation" includes, but is not limited to, operation, management, and marketing.
- "Person" means the federal government or any agency thereof, the state or any agency, subdivision, taxing district or municipal corporation thereof other than county, city or town, any private corporation, partnership, association, or individual.
- "Tourism" means economic activity resulting from tourists, which may include sales of overnight lodging, meals, tours, gifts, or souvenirs.
- "Tourism promotion" means activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists; developing strategies to expand tourism; operating tourism promotion agencies; and funding marketing of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists.
- "Tourism-related facility" means real or tangible personal property with a usable life of three or more years, or constructed with volunteer labor, and used to support tourism, performing arts, or to accommodate tourist activities.
- "Tourist" means a person who travels from a place of residence to a different town, city, county, state, or country, for purposes of business, pleasure, recreation, education, arts, heritage, or culture.
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**Des Moines Chamber of Commerce - Cruise Series Pilot
Application for LTAC Funds
High Priority Considerations**

Addendum #1

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this grant. We deeply appreciate your thoughtful consideration of our ability to increase tourism in the City of Des Moines through this series of events.

Following are supplemental comments addressing **RCW 67.28.1816**, **RCW 67.28.080**, and the High Priority parameters mentioned in the grant application:

1. Demonstrated potential to result in overnight stays

This Oktoberfest cruise is designed to be a pilot for a series of cruises that would be integrated into a small handful of significant community festivals, and occur on Friday evenings as openers to these festivals, such as; Men in Black, Waterland, Blues and Brews, and Oktoberfest.

Timing as it was, there were no vessels available for Friday evening, Sept 18 in support of the Oktoberfest celebration. However, based on the success of the Historical Society event (a Waterland, Sunday afternoon), we believe that we can be a successful addition to the Oktoberfest celebration, and prove worthiness as a component of a festival that has a regional draw.

Based on the attendance of the mentioned festivals and the vision of these festivals to draw attendees from 50+ miles, we believe that a series of Friday evening sunset cruises that provide alcoholic beverages will naturally invite attendees to stay overnight rather than drive home.

2. Promote Des Moines, its events, and features to tourists outside King County

Because Des Moines has the only waterfront access between Seattle and Tacoma, activities that invite people to recreate on the water will have a natural draw. When attached to unique events such as Men In Black, Oktoberfest, or Blues n Brews, there is no doubt that folks outside King County will participate in the cruises, as they already visit these events.

3. High potential for economic benefit to Des Moines

The Chamber is highly invested in the promotion of its member businesses and will produce materials for the cruises (maps, flyers, cards, etc.) that invite tourists to our restaurants, shops, and services. Because the cruises embark and disembark in our Marina only, and during a celebration, there is high potential of participation in any other activities planned in Des Moines (including paid parking and Marina moorage).

4. History of success in Des Moines

These cruises will be born out of a partnership with Argosy Cruise Lines, which has a long-standing history with the City of Des Moines through our Christmas Ship events. In addition, the most recent Argosy Cruise out of Des Moines - sponsored by the Historical Society - was a fully booked event one week ahead of the event - with little advertising.

5. Minimize duplication of services, with an element of partnership

There is no other cruise or water activity planned for any of the celebrations mentioned. The goal of these cruises is to be a component and enhancement of already existing celebrations; to draw people to participate, who may not otherwise visit, and to begin to advertise and activate our unique, waterfront setting on the Sound.

This cruise series has the potential to create partnerships on many fronts among our non-profits, our business community, regional sponsors, and the City.

6. Enhance City-owned tourism facilities

The greatest tourism facility in the city of Des Moines is the Marina Complex; with its marina, trailhead, beach park, coming Marina Steps, and potential for retail locations. These cruises will spotlight these opportunities and features to all who visit, with the potential of not only drawing patrons, but investment.

**Des Moines Chamber of Commerce - Cruise Series Pilot
Application for LTAC Funds
Breakdown of Requested Funds**

Addendum #2

Amount Requested: \$7,734.87

Base Price for the Vessel:	\$6,000
Required deadhead transport:	\$600.00
Required for provision of non-alcoholic beverages:	\$834.87 (Water, tea, coffee, soda)
Required fee for outside catering:	\$300

\$7,734.87





**Des Moines Chamber of Commerce
Business Plan
2026**

Executive Summary

The Des Moines Chamber of Commerce has been founded to foster economic vitality, public-private alignment, and commercial growth in Des Moines. By connecting local businesses, residents, non-profits, and governmental leadership, the Chamber is working to enhance our resilient local economy. This plan outlines our mission and operational roadmap, and demonstrates our strength as a viable and dynamic support for the Des Moines business community.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to bring residents, nonprofits, businesses and local government together to create meaningful connections, new opportunities, and lasting growth.

Core Action Plan

The Des Moines Chamber works to fulfill their mission of:

Connecting; Through multi-schedule business networking, targeted multi-channel communications (newsletters, social media), personal outreach, and public community events, we connect businesses to each other, and bring local and regional residents to our businesses.

Creating Opportunities; Through member spotlights on-line and at events, hosted brick-and-mortar venue events, and peer-led educational platforms and marketing, we encourage and highlight the strengths of our business community.

Promoting lasting, economic growth; Through multi-stakeholder relationship-building across residential, visitor, commercial, and municipal/state leadership channels, we encourage solidarity, create a business voice, and advocate for lasting economic health for our community.

2026 Operational Work Plan

1. Administrative Foundation and Governance

Establishment: Completed establishment of all required administrative elements in providing proper governance of a 501(c)(6) including banking, accounting systems, and required governance policies.

Membership: Finalized membership tiers and recruitment process

Non-profit: Certified with State as a non-profit and working to establish a 502(c)(3) for tax-deductible gifts, and community development funding.

2. Branding, digital infrastructure, and communication

Mission: Established a mission statement that aligns with economic support and growth,

Website: Built and launched a modern, accessible website that serves as a portal for local commerce, messaging, marketing, and promotion of businesses and their programs and events

Social Presence: Established a recognized and followed on-line presence in social media channels

Communication: Established a regularly published newsletter for the dissemination of education, information, and spotlighting members and the community

Branding: Consider a tag line, eg; Vibrant business, vibrant community

3. Economic Initiatives

Signature Event: Create and execute at least one major revenue-generating community event to further our Mission and build organizational sustainability.

Resource Directory: Publish a user-friendly resource guide for community residents and local businesses.

Visible Capital Projects: Execute 2 targeted commercial enhancements (focusing on lighting, frontage treatments, signage, etc.) using a pre-permitted list in coordination with the local Arts Commission or the City.

4. Connection and Coalition-building

Inter-Agency Partnerships: Re-establish and strengthen formal, collaborative relationships with the City of Des Moines, regional chambers of commerce, and non-profit leaders.

Events & Education: Partner with local organizations and members to produce community events and host educational workshops, resource fairs, forums, and stakeholder roundtables

Connection Programming: Host and Co-host regularly scheduled connecting events for the business community, leadership, and stakeholders.

Shared Network Database: Develop a central volunteer and business networking database for streamlining community participation.

Addendum #5

Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Estimated Draft Budget for 2207 based on Form 1024

Revenue

Gifts, Grants, Contributions	\$20,000
Membership Fees	\$80,000
Event revenue	\$30,000

Total Revenue	130,000
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Expenses

Fundraising	\$5,000
Compensation of officers	\$60,000
Occupancy, Utilities	\$12,000
Depreciation	\$1,000
Professional fees	\$4,000
Misc not otherwise listed	\$12,000

Total Expenses	\$94,000
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Promotional Efforts

All promotional efforts can be viewed on our source facebook page. Events with a regional draw are appropriately boosted to reach a wider audience and have been successful in producing feedback.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61587925570680>

In addition:

- We have reached out to Explore Seattle Southside for who will promote this event on their free channels
- We have recently partnered with the Waterland Blog who will promote our events regionally
- We will be partnering with the Oktoberfest team on any promotional materials or efforts they produce.