

DATE: October 12, 2005
TO: Rebecca Mulhollen
FROM: Christina Robertson

RE: Trend Report – Summer Quarter 2005

HOSPITALITY/TOURISM

Overall, hospitality/tourism jobs in Snohomish County are steadily increasing from 20,400 (8/04) to 23,000 (8/05) in third quarter 2005 (13% increase)

- Snohomish County awarded more than \$50,000 to eight non-profit organizations to promote cultural events and tourism throughout Snohomish County. Funded projects include: ArtBeat, The Arts Council of Snohomish County, Edmonds Visitor Center, Future of Flight Foundation, Imagine Children's Museum, League of Snohomish County Heritage Organizations, Museum of Snohomish County History and Snohomish Festival of Pumpkins Marketing Association. The money comes from taxes paid on hotel and motel lodging and are required by state law to be spent on activities that enhance tourism.
- The opening of the new Future of Flight Museum at Paine Field has been delayed partially due to transportation issues following Hurricane Katrina. One of the center's showpieces, a 4-story tall tailfin from a 747, is stranded in Arizona. The opening of the museum is now anticipated between Thanksgiving and Christmas. More than 200,000 visitors are expected to visit the flight center each year and take tours of the Boeing assembly plant, twice the number that now tour the aircraft plant, making it the most popular single tourism destination in the county. The Future of Flight will also provide meeting space for 250 people, plus special event space for up to 700 people. Business and aviation events and conferences, tourists, business travelers and school groups coming to the new education, recreation and entertainment site are expected to generate an additional \$3.5 million annually for the county's tourism industry.
- Hilton Garden Inn, a new 102-room luxury hotel being built adjacent to the Future of Flight Museum, is scheduled to open in early November. In addition to HDTV screens, high-speed internet and other high-tech attractions, there will be space for conferences for up to 250 people. The Hilton's kitchen staff will serve meeting meals not only at both sites, but also in the hotel's 120-seat restaurant. A hiring event was held at WorkSource Everett in late July in preparation for the hotel's opening.
- Holiday Inn Everett: Over a year after major renovations began on the former Howard Johnson, the new Holiday Inn Everett is gearing up for its mid-November opening. With 250 beds, it will be Everett's largest hotel, as well as a major conference and tourism center providing banquet and conference space for groups up to 800. At the peak of construction there were approximately 100 people working on the project.

- River Rock Inn has opened in Arlington. Started as a luxury bed and breakfast, the 5,000 square foot facility also has space meetings and conferences, including dinner for up to 50 guests. In only six months since opening, they have already served thousands of guests at events including chamber meetings, business retreats, seminars, weddings, anniversary celebrations

- Everett Events Center: The July 16 issue of Billboard ranked the facility the eighth best of its kind in the world for venues with a capacity of 5,000-10,000, and fourth in the U.S. with the same criteria. Also, Venues Today magazine ranked the center seventh in the world in its class size. More than 1.2 million people have attended events since the center opened two years ago.

- The Everett Conference Center (housed in the Everett Events Center), hosts hundreds of events annually that include meetings, banquets, receptions and consumer shows. The facility has more than 57,000 square feet of exhibit space and 12,000 square feet of ballroom and meeting space for small or large groups. Services include and on-site event manager and full-service on-site caterer

- Lynnwood Convention Center: In its first month of operation, the Lynnwood Convention Center more than exceeded expectations. Fifty-nine meetings and events occurred at the new facility in its first 30 days of operation. Since then, the Center has hosted groups from throughout the region. Revenues during the first 90 days of business have already reached 75 percent of first-year projections and events are booked into 2008. In addition, the Lynnwood Convention Center was named “Best New Facility” in a poll of Western Washington television. The new 55,000 square foot facility has 34,000 square feet dedicated to meeting and exhibition space.

- Construction has begun on a new performing arts center in Edmonds. Due to be completed in October 2006, the Edmonds Center for the Arts will be the result of an \$18 million remodeling of a former school into a state-of-the-art performing arts center, housing the Olympic Ballet Theatre and the Cascade Symphony Orchestra.

- Tulalip tribes have broken ground on a 13-story hotel and convention center in the middle of Quil Ceda Village. The plan is for a 380-room hotel with convention space for 2,000 people, but it will be built for easy expansion. The hotel will sit on four or five acres between the Tulalip Casino and the recently opened Seattle Premium Outlets, just west of the newly opened 1,200-seat amphitheater. Construction is expected to take about two years. The tribes do not plan to affiliate the hotel with a national chain, but will own and operate it themselves. Tribal members will be picked to get hotel management training.