



**Press Release**

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## SEATTLE-KING COUNTY TOURISM SETS NEW RECORDS

*Newly-Released Industry Research Indicates Significant Increases in Visitor Volumes and Spending, and Tourism Officials Project Continued Industry Growth*

SEATTLE – For the second year in a row, Seattle and King County have posted record visitor volumes and spending, according to a report released today by Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau (SCVB).

According to SCVB’s *2006 Market Profile and Economic Impact of Seattle-King County Visitors*, compiled by CIC Research, Inc., overnight visitor volumes in the city and county increased to a record 9.4 million in 2006, up 3.4 percent over the previous year. These visitors spent a record \$4.75 billion while visiting the city and county, up 10 percent over the previous year. Total state and local taxes paid by visitors while in King County increased 11.4 percent, from \$376 million in 2005 to \$419 million in 2006.

“We’re very encouraged by 2007 year-to-date hotel performance, convention attendance, Port of Seattle cruise business and worldwide media coverage of the Olympic Sculpture Park and other Seattle attractions,” said Don Welsh, SCVB President and CEO. “Additionally, Seattle’s role as a vibrant center for business innovation and development has clearly put the city and the region on the world’s radar,” said Welsh. “Seattle is now a top destination for both leisure and business travel.”

On June 11, Air France inaugurated non-stop service between Seattle and Paris, capping years of efforts by trade and tourism officials at the Port of Seattle, State of Washington and Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as high tech and other business leaders. On July 4, Aeromexico inaugurated the first daily non-stop service between Seattle and Mexico City, directly linking Washington State with Mexico, one of Washington State’s top trade partners.

On the cruise front, the Port of Seattle projects record passenger volumes of 390,000 in 2007 with five major cruise lines offering 190 sailings from the Port of Seattle through November 4.

In April, a survey of AAA travel agency managers identified Seattle as one of its “hot spots” for summer 2007. Seattle ranked third among domestic destinations following Orlando and Las Vegas. New York and Los Angeles rounded out the top-five destinations.

“This weekend, the eyes of the world will be on our region as Boeing rolls out its 787 Dreamliner,” said Jeff Wright, Chairman of the SCVB Board of Directors. “This year is shaping up to be a milestone year for regional travel and tourism. Years from now, I believe we’ll acknowledge 2007 as the year Seattle ascended to the ranks of a first-tier international destination.”

Seattle’s Convention and Visitors Bureau is a non-profit economic development agency responsible for competitively marketing Seattle as a destination for meeting and convention groups and leisure travelers. Direct visitor spending benefits hotels, retailers, restaurants, attractions, transportation services and other businesses, and supports jobs for 62,000 people in the Seattle and the region.

**Summary of 2006 Seattle/King County Visitor Impact:**

**Visitor Volumes**

2005	2006	Percent Change
9.1 mil.	9.4 mil.	+3.4%

**Visitor Expenditures**

2005	2006	% Change
\$4.3 bil.	\$4.75 bil.	+10%

**Tourism Tax Revenues**

2005	2006	% Change
\$376 mil.	\$419 mil.	+10.4%

**Jobs Generated by Tourism**

2005	2006	% Change
60,000	62,000	+3.2%

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