

# Key Takeaways

## 2026 Maritime Washington Partner Meeting

### EXPERT TABLES

#### **Tribal Collaboration: Protecting Our Waters Together**

*Patti Gobin, Special Project Manager, Tulalip Tribes*

- Building relationships with Tribal nations takes time, intention, and respect. Patti says that “respect is the core ingredient for Coast Salish people.”
- Most Tribes have many internal departments, so make sure you’re reaching out to the right one. You can also ask to get on the agenda for a Tribal Council meeting.
- Those partnering or working with Tribal nations should take the time to understand the place, people, and cultural context connected to their work.
- Be aware of protocols: when you’re hosting an event, invite the local Tribe to do an opening song or prayer. Make sure to ask well in advance.

#### **Historic Preservation Programs**

*Kim Gant, Historic Preservation Programs Manager, Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)*

- There are a range of preservation tools available that can support heritage work at different stages, such as grants, tax credits, registers, and regulatory processes. Reaching out to DAHP is a good way to access these tools and resources.
- New and existing tools (like WISAARD and model local ordinances) are helping make preservation data and protections more accessible and consistent across jurisdictions.
- There is growing interest in better aligning preservation efforts with natural resource conservation and local policy tools, especially at the local government level.

#### **How to Find and Win Grants**

*Kristy Conrad, Development Director, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation*

- Strong applications start with doing research to understand what funders care about, what they’ve funded before, and how your project fits their priorities.
- If the funder shares their grant evaluation metrics, use them in building your grant application. Put the most effort into the sections that count for the most points!
- Clear, tailored applications stand out. Make sure it’s crystal clear exactly what you’re requesting funding for.
- Building relationships matters! Connecting with funders early, maintaining communication after awards, and using feedback to strengthen future applications.

#### **Engaging Your Community**

*Marie Kidhe, Community Engagement Strategic Advisor, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods*

- Always start by thinking about your intended audience: what do they want?
- People come to places, programs, and events because they see something in it that relates to them.
- Summer programs are a great way to engage youth & younger folks. You don't have to build it yourself! Find a city/school/other org already doing youth programs & offer to host a day for them.
- Attend your partner's/community's events. Don't just expect them to come to you if you don't show up for them first.
- Of social media, Marie says, "I don't believe in just putting a lot of stuff out there. It's a waste of time. Research who it is that you're trying to connect to and be very targeted/intentional about what you're crafting for them"

## ORGANIZATIONAL BREAKOUT GROUPS

### Boating and Education

- Organizations are relying on partnerships to share resources, co-host events, and reach wider audiences, since most don't have the staff or funding to do everything on their own.
- People are more likely to care about and support maritime preservation when they can experience it firsthand through events, getting out on the water, or interacting directly with historic boats, especially for younger audiences.
- Preserving historic boats is expensive and requires specialized skills; many groups are struggling with limited staff capacity and burnout, making it harder to maintain programs and consistent outreach.
- What's working? Partnerships, reaching back out to past participants and donors (even if they're from a long time ago), lectures, in-person events, inviting politicians and other decision-makers to see your work.

### Tourism and Events

- Many organizations are struggling with limited funding (especially for admin costs), difficulty recruiting volunteers, and declining reach on social media as algorithms change.
- What's working? Getting out into the community: partnering with other organizations, attending their events to get your word out, advertising locally (like newspapers), and engaging people face-to-face rather than relying only on digital outreach.
- Programs that focus on youth are seeing stronger turnout and impact, especially when organizations work directly with schools or create opportunities for kids to participate in experiences typically geared toward adults (within reason).
- There is growing interest in building more partnerships with Indigenous communities.
- Potential financial resources:
  - o Local banks will sometimes have philanthropic funds. Sounds simple, but look for banks with water in their logo!

### Local Government

- Local governments are trying to manage growth, development, changes at the federal level, and sea-level rise while also protecting historic places and working waterfronts, which often compete for space and funding.
- Public agencies are facing increased scrutiny, and there is a growing need to clearly show the value of preservation work and keep it relevant to current community priorities.
- Progress depends on coordination between agencies, ports, and community partners, especially as issues like climate change cut across multiple plans and priorities rather than fitting into one area.
- Some jurisdictions have had success forming inter-governmental councils including City, Port, County, PUD, and economic development council.
- Book recommendation: *Cultural Creatives* by Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson

### Museums, Interpretive Centers, and Historical Societies

- Potential financial resources:
  - o County lodging tax is often re-granted to support tourism-related activities, including heritage destinations like museums. Research if your County does this.
  - o County recording fees are a potential funding source for archives—reach out to your County to ask if this is available.
  - o Washington State Historical Society Heritage Capital Projects and Diversity in Local History grants are good resources.
- Postcard mailings can be an effective fundraising tool—targeted mailing lists (based on demographics like age or income) can often be purchased through private companies; local printers may be able to help source these lists.
- Board meeting timing and format can make it hard for people with full-time jobs or family commitments to participate. For younger/more diverse boards, you may need to adjust.
- Volunteers are more engaged when they have roles they enjoy, feel trusted with real responsibility, and hear from staff regularly.
- Making volunteers feel valued goes a long way; simple things like giving them an official role, a uniform, and being flexible with their schedules helps keep people involved.

# Thank you for joining us at the 2026 Maritime Washington Partner Meeting!



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We look forward to seeing you in 2027!

More photos at: [maritimewa.org/2026PartnerMeetingPics](https://maritimewa.org/2026PartnerMeetingPics)