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March 19, 2010

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SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON CVB LAUNCHES NEW BRAND

New name and logo developed to differentiate and increase awareness of region as a premier tourist destination

VANCOUVER, Wash.— In spite of the fact that the southwest region of Washington is home to Vancouver, the fourth largest and oldest city in the state, it has long suffered from a mistaken identity. And, when it comes to attracting tourists to the region, the confusion between Vancouver, Wash., and Vancouver, B.C. has always proven to be a huge hurdle for the Southwest Washington Convention and Visitors Bureau (SWCVB).

To overcome this challenge, SWCVB announced today that it is redefining itself through the launch of a new brand, which will raise the profile of Vancouver and the region and more immediately differentiate the city from its namesake to the north (yes, Vancouver, Wash., was settled first).

“When leisure travelers and meeting planners discover all the recreational opportunities the region has to offer as well as its historic significance for the Northwest, it’s an easy sell,” said SWCVB President and CEO Kim Bennett. “But it takes a lot of initial explaining to define exactly where we are located. Our new brand will solve this problem.”

The organization’s new branding, “Visit Vancouver USA | Discover the Original,” satisfies three key marketing objectives for the area.

- The inclusion of “Vancouver USA” improves the region’s geographic recognition by quickly differentiating the Washington city from the city in British Columbia.
- The tagline “Discover the Original” positions the area as a place with historical significance.
- The new brand also includes a strong tourism-based call to action to “visit” the Vancouver area.

While the new brand is steeped in history, the graphic treatment of the new logo has a contemporary feel, a departure from the previous logo that conveyed a more historic sentiment. In addition to the new brand, the organization’s formal business name has been changed to Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office, which will



accompany the new logo. A new Web site featuring the name and logo is also being launched today, complemented by updated marketing collateral and visitor guides.

“We are very excited about this new direction and believe it will bode well for attracting tourists and meetings to the region,” said Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt. “The brand puts a fresh and vibrant new face on our region while not overlooking our deep historic roots.”

The new brand was developed with input from regional community and civic leaders, local business owners and managers, and members of the local hospitality industry. Additionally, SWCVB surveyed meeting planners throughout the country as well as independent travelers who had requested Visitors Guides in the past, some who had visited Vancouver and others who had not.

“I am confident that this brand will begin clearing up the confusion between the Canadian city and our city, which was really reinforced during the 2010 Winter Olympics,” said Gerry Link, the general manager of the Hilton Vancouver Washington and Vancouver Convention Center. “We received numerous calls from travelers who mistakenly thought they were calling the other Vancouver.”

Vancouver is the primary city in Clark County, Wash., located in the southwestern corner of the state just north of Portland, Ore. Vancouver’s revitalized downtown core offers an eclectic blend of new construction and historic architecture and all the amenities of a large metropolitan city but with the charm and hospitality of a small urban town. In addition to Vancouver, Clark County is home to such charming towns as Camas and Washougal to the east and Battleground and Ridgefield to the north. The region is considered the gateway to such natural wonders as Mount St. Helens, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic area and to Washington’s scenic coastal towns.

“From Vancouver to Yacolt and everywhere in between, they will discover diverse recreational opportunities and cultural attractions throughout the county,” said Clark County Commission Chair Steve Stuart. “I’m certain this new brand will do just that.”

Tourism in Clark County provides more than 4,000 jobs and generates more than \$421 million annually in direct spending to the local economy. The area has 34 hotels, motels and bed & breakfasts offering 2,600 guestrooms and numerous opportunities for shopping and dining.

About Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office

Vancouver USA Regional Tourism Office (formerly Southwest Washington Convention & Visitors Bureau) is an economic development organization responsible for competitively marketing Vancouver and the surrounding area as a destination for meetings, conventions, and group and leisure travelers. The organization’s mission is to promote Vancouver and Clark County by increasing convention and visitor business. For more information call 360-750-1553, or log on to www.visitvancouverusa.com.

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