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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Wine Country Funds City Revitalization *Two Wine Towns Receive Awards!*

SEATTLE, Wash. – (December 1, 2005) – This past summer Washington Wine Country announced its new City Revitalization Fund, a grant program to be distributed to Eastern Washington “wine towns” to fund revitalization projects that inject a wine country theme. Following an application process, the 2005 recipients have been selected and Washington Wine Country is proud to support two exciting projects from the City of Richland and the City of Kennewick.

The largest grant of \$15,000 has been awarded to the City of Richland for the design, production and erection of a “Tulip Lane Monument Sign.” The project is intended to recognize a growing cluster of wineries in Richland. Three wineries, J. Bookwalter, Tagaris and Barnard Griffin, and one vineyard, Russell Vineyard, all lie in a single, compact location without adequate signage.

“We believe strongly in the idea of ‘clustering’ as a driving force for tourism and economic development and it is something that we want to encourage and wholeheartedly support,” states Janet Leduc, the founding director of Washington Wine Country.

The proposed monument design will be 8’ wide by 12’ tall and will be made of a variety of materials including sandstone, stainless steel and copper. It will incorporate the Washington Wine Country brand by implementing the name, logo and brand colors into the sign. The sign will be erected in one of two locations off of I-82 and the Queensgate Drive Exit. (see attached rendering and plot map)

The City of Kennewick, with the second award, will be painting their most highly trafficked areas with Washington Wine Country banners. \$10,000 will go towards funding over 100 banners lining the corridor from I-82 along Clearwater Avenue to Columbia Center Boulevard. They will continue along Columbia Center Boulevard into the epicenter of tourism down to the city limits at Highway 240. Banners will also be installed throughout the shopping district and into the new Three Rivers Convention Center.

“The Washington Wine Country “perfectly balanced” campaign will be a definite asset to Southeastern Washington and Northeastern Oregon’s most highly visited shopping and entertainment district,” Stated Carol Evans, Economic Development Specialist for the City of Kennewick.

Columbia Center Boulevard sees an average of approximately 37,000 in daily traffic with peak season traffic reaching over 50,000.

Both recipients leveraged the grant monies by providing a local match for their projects of which at least 50% was required to be in cash. Some of the labor and administrative costs are in the form of in-kind donations with the exception of the City of Richland whose match was one to one.

Washington Wine Country believes that the City Revitalization Fund will continue to grow year after year and they are striving to bring together governments, private institutions, local citizens and businesses to celebrate the community and promote cultural tourism. This type of promotion will ultimately increase tourism which will lead to a stronger economy and more jobs for local workers.

“Ultimately, revitalization is about rekindling the spirit of the community and local pride and that’s what we are sure to accomplish with these two projects,” concluded Leduc.

For more information on this program, please contact Communications Director Jackie Walsh.

Formed in 2003, Washington Wine Country is a non-profit association of Eastern Washington businesses promoting wine-related tourism, economic development and recognition of the world-class wine-growing region comprising the Yakima Valley, Columbia Valley, Walla Walla Valley and Red Mountain appellations. www.winecountrywashington.org

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