

Form Name:	Lodging Tax Application
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IP Address:	209.34.142.130
Unique ID:	675063684
Location:	46.627101898193, -123.0092010498

ORGANIZATION / PROJECT INFORMATION

Organization name	Discover Lewis County
Project name	Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project
Project coordinator	Tamara Hayes
Amount requested from Lewis County	79500
Total project amount	169810

APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Tamara Hayes
Street address	1909 South Gold Street Centralia, WA 98531
Mailing address (if different from street address)	1909 South Gold Street Centralia, WA 98531
Current home phone	(360) 740-1495
Current work phone	(360) 740-2656
Current cell phone	(415) 378-7666
Current email address	Tamara@discoverlewiscounty.com
Agency Tax ID Number	916001351
Organization Unified Business Identifier (UBI)	212002978
UBI expiration date	January 01, 2022
Type of organization:	Government agency
Organization's mission statement or purpose (one or two sentences):	Discover Lewis County's purpose is to promote events, adventure opportunities, historical sites, cultural institutions, scenic road trips, lodging and more for our centrally located county. We want visitors to come, play, and stay in Lewis County.
Year the organization was founded:	2015
Has your organization received Lewis County lodging tax funding in the past?	Yes

**When did your organization receive
Lewis County lodging tax funding?** 2020

**How much did your organization /
project receive?** \$154,086

For organizations that received funding for fiscal year 2020: How did COVID-19 affect your event(s) / project(s)? (Please include details about any unspent lodging tax grant funding.)

2020, has been an unparalleled year when it comes to marketing, events, tourism and just about everything. The world has changed as we know it and we are still in the process of redefining what tourism will mean moving forward. Discover Lewis County started off 2020 with a nice rise in visitors to the website and a lot of new found activity and partnerships around the Mount St. Helen's 40th Anniversary campaign. We arranged for a Tacoma Mall sky banner, a Denver MSH40 media and print campaign in partnership with the Port of Seattle, and we were working hard to prepare to promote Lewis County events and other activities when the pandemic hit.

As soon the pandemic truly hit Washington State and the world began to shut down, we pulled all promotional activities. Isaac Freeman, the DLC Project Manager, took on the role of creating videos for the Lewis County Public Health Department and Tamara Hayes, the DLC Director, dedicated her time to launching a new website for the county LewisCountyTogether.com. The website was dedicated to keeping us together while we were apart. Tamara, also took on the role of Grant Administrator for Lewis County dedicated to the Coronavirus Relief Funds grant from the Department of Commerce. During this period we were able to not spend any funds related to Discover Lewis County programs as we decided what would be the next steps.

Around mid-June, the team regrouped as Discover Lewis County and set a plan for 2020. DLC had 4 LTAC Grants and we felt that we could use all the funds to promote responsible recreation and benefit Lewis County long-term.

1. MSH40

- Tacoma Sky Banner - MSH40 went up in July
- Washington State Tourism Guide - ad for MSH 40
- Worked with the MSH40 coalition of 25 organizations dedicated to Mount Saint Helens
- MSH 40 - canvas print campaign
- Denver, Colorado International Airport billboard campaign in partnership with Port of Seattle
- Denver, CO National Cinemedia Campaign in partnership with Port of Seattle
- Denver, CO social media campaign driving traffic to MSH40 and Discover Lewis County

All Denver campaigns run October to February. Port of Seattle is covering any costs that occur in 2021.

2. Online & Print Marketing

- Additional marketing and social media for Denver
- Social media promotion for events in Fall and winter 2020
- Tacoma Sky Banner was for Packwood Lake
- Printing of Lewis County Trail Guides
- September 2020 launch of the new Discover Lewis County with the support of Lewis County Information Technology

- Staff time

3. Three Tourism Brochures - creation and production of 3 tourism brochures - will be completed by December 2020

- Lewis County History Guide with informational support from the Lewis County Historical Society

- Lewis County OHV Guide with informational support from Cowlitz Basin ORV Club and Washington Hometown

- Lewis County Non-Motorized Water Activity Guide - with informational support from Cowlitz River Kayaks

- Staff Time

4. Tourism Support Program

- DLC will host 4 tourism support meetings from September to December for Lewis County lodging tax awardees

- Ordered new sandwich board for DLC kiosk

- Ordered new kiosk signage to go around the kiosk

- Printing of brochures both new ones and older ones that were out of stock

- Worked with the Lewis County Outdoor Recreation and Tourism group to create a tourism commission for the county. This group took the summer off and has regrouped for the fall.

- Staff Time

Discover Lewis County has been able to use all of the funds that were awarded in 2020. We not only promoted COVID-friendly activities for this year, launched a new dynamic website, created new content for distribution and strategically placed the organization for a larger tourism impact in 2021, resulting in heads in beds. This pandemic has highlighted how valuable tourism is to our local economy. Discover Lewis County is primed and ready to meet these new challenges and assist in keeping our tourism industry thriving.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name

Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project

1. Describe how the project promotes tourism in all of Lewis County's unincorporated areas.

The Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project promotes tourism through a variety of different avenues.

~ Lewis County Electronic Billboard - The goal of this project is to promote events happening throughout the county to the centrally located I-5 Corridor. There is a new electronic billboard placed between Centralia and Chehalis. DLC, hopes to subscribe to a one-year promotional plan that will allow us to promote all events happening in the county to local residents as well as visitors. The billboards see 19,000 cars a day. DLC is aware that tourism is changing as a result of COVID-19 and we want to encourage local residents and visitors to get out and ecreate responsibly and plan an overnight trip to east Lewis County.

~ Lewis County smallest park and Welcome to Lewis County sign - Located along the extremely busy I5 corridor between Chehalis and Centralia in Lewis County lies the future home of the smallest park in Lewis County and the Welcome to Lewis County billboard. We plan to create the counties smallest park with picnic table and historic looking welcome to Lewis County sign which will have the Discover Lewis County website listed where a visitor or local can find all the happenings in Lewis County including where to stay and play while they are in Lewis County.

~ Discover Lewis County Mural - We would like to create a series of Discover Lewis County murals throughout Lewis County. For 2021, we are aiming to create 1 to 2 murals. Ideally one mural will be in eastern Lewis County and one in western Lewis County in high trafficked areas. We hope to partner with tourism and private industry partners in the area to best identify where the mural should be and explore appropriate content that meets the needs of DLC, yet embraces the community in which the mural will reside.

~ Lewis County advertising. DLC is asked annually to promote in the local radio and print media. Traditionally we have dedicated very little resources to local advertising. As part of adjusting to new local tourism model we want to try local print and media outlets to compliment the Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project and aim to educate locals and visitors about opportunities to explore Lewis County and have a local overnight adventure.

2. Describe how the project will enhance tourism and result in “heads in beds.” Tourism Enhancement Project goal is targeting visitors and showcasing what Lewis County has to offer once you are in our community. These projects are enhanced by our other programs aimed at Washington and Oregon. For this program, the marketing is directed to entice locals and visitors who are using their RV's or campers, tents and hotels, to recreate responsibly without having to travel on planes or ships. The staycation is the biggest travel trend to come out of the pandemic. Travel insiders expect staycations to dominate the 2021 travel scene. Visitors and locals alike will learn about Discover Lewis County through the proposed Lewis County Tourism Enhancement projects as well as our brick and mortar visitor information center at the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds. Our intention is by learning about what Lewis County has to offer you will plan an overnight to Packwood. The trip will include a hike Packwood Lake, a night at the Packwood Lodge and good eats at Packwood Brewing. Another adventure could have guests staying the weekend at Mayfield Lake while they use the Lewis County non-motorized water guide to do some kayaking on the Cowlitz River.

3. List the responsible party / parties. DLC staff are responsible for all content creation. We partner with local, and state wide tourism organizations on special projects. We also work closely with Lewis County non-profits, other lodging tax participants and private industry for our marketing campaigns. The DLC website and social media channels are used share Lewis County events, attractions and lodging opportunities under the unified branding of Discover Lewis County.

4. Describe the area the project will serve, as well as the project's expected impact. DLC serves the entirety of Lewis County by providing consistency in our tourism efforts as a recognizable and trustworthy brand. We are Lewis County's hub for all there is to do and see. The impact will be to reach the local and visiting audiences and encourage them to stay in Lewis County.

5. Describe how the project will specifically promote tourism. The sole purpose of DLC is to specifically promote tourism to Lewis County resulting in heads in beds. This project will continue that purpose by reaching a new audience. We want to reach an audience that is within a few 2-3 hour drive of Lewis County. We expect to see more visitors throughout the year but they will be staying for shorter periods of time. One family can do a weekend in Packwood one week and then the next month a weekend at Mayfield Lake. DLC will focus on the marketing channels described to promote countywide tourism to events and other activities and encourage visitors to stay local, resulting in head in beds.

6. Describe how you have collaborated with other entities throughout Lewis County to promote tourism.

DLC collaborates both directly and indirectly with most tourism entities throughout Lewis County. We promote the fellow LTAC recipients, local businesses and attractions and lodging opportunities on our website and in marketing campaigns. We partner with other groups for special projects, such as rack card content and video campaigns. DLC provides visitor kiosks, sandwich boards, and rack cards to visitor organizations throughout the county.

7. Describe why your project should receive funding.

Now more than ever we need to invest in tourism. DiscoverLewisCounty.com is a year-round effort to promote Lewis County. We focus on serving our unincorporated areas resulting in "heads in bed." DLC has created a unified and recognizable brand that successfully drives traffic to our website where visitors can find out what there is to see and do in Lewis County.

8. Describe how your organization would respond to potential cancellations or closures, such as those caused by COVID-19 in 2020.

Discover Lewis County would respond to potential cancellations or closures, such as those caused by COVID-19 similar to how we responded to the pandemic in 2020. Discover Lewis County is promoting Lewis County as a whole. We promote tourism activities which at times are events but can be scenic drives, hiking, OHV Trails, skiing, and so much more. We are promoting discovering what Lewis County has to offer and encouraging guests to come, play, and stay. When the pandemic hit, we were able to roll back our advertising until the phases were lifted and it was acceptable to promote visitors to "recreate responsibly". For 2021, our projects are aimed at promoting the Discover Lewis County website as well as creating long-term assets that will promote visiting the county for a variety of reasons as opposed to a singular event.

USE OF HOTEL / MOTEL TAX

Please indicate below the types of activities for which the lodging tax monies would be used:

TOURISM PROMOTION

Describe the expected results (measurable outcomes) of your project, with the dollar amount for each outcome.

DLC is asking for support to fund our staff who are the creators behind every project we take on.

~\$35,000 of this requests goes to funding DLC staff, website administration and travel costs. DLC does not ask for operational costs such as rent, heat, & lighting for the DLC visitor information center. These costs are covered by our relationship with the Southwest Washington Fairgrounds. The measurable outcome is continued production of innovative marketing campaigns.

~\$45,000 of this request will go to funding the marketing and promotional materials related to the Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project: 12-month campaign on the local digital billboard, local radio and print ads, Lewis County's Smallest Park - located on the I5 corridor with a wood billboard and picnic area, and Discover Lewis County murals strategically placed on the White Pass Scenic Byway or historic Route 6. The measurable outcomes will be based on website traffic and billboard analytics.

Total number of attendees predicted to attend:

150,000 Unique Users

Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number

Discover Lewis County had 120,000 users to our website in 2019. In 2020, we saw active users drop during the height of the pandemic but the numbers are continuing to rise as we promote more on our website and social media for the fall and winter months. For 2021, we predict users on the website to reach 150,000 active users. For Facebook our goal is to increase followers to 35,000 in 2021. For Instagram we expect users to continue grow by 15%. Lodging tax dollars are critical for increasing the numbers of users to the website because new users come from good advertising campaigns.

a. Projected number of attendees who will travel fifty (50) miles or more one way from their home or business to attend:

10% increase in travelers from 50 miles or more

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number

Lodging tax dollars helps Discover Lewis County to create innovative new marketing campaigns. The Lewis County Tourism enhancement project we allow us to market to countless new visitors. The electronic billboard is seen by over 19,000 cars a day that is 6,935,000 cars a year. The I5 sees on average 140,000 cars a day which would be over 51 million cars a year. The same goes for the mural project and the reach by advertising with our local radio stations. Each of these avenues creates an opportunity for visitors or locals to learn about an activity that could make them want to enjoy a staycation in Lewis County.

a. Projected number of participants who will travel from another country or state to attend:

10% increase in travelers from another state or country

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number The Lewis County Enhancement Project especially the Smallest Park in Lewis County will give the DLC website a potential 51 million viewers a year This is an astronomical number that will help educate the public about what there is to see and do in Lewis County.

a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in paid accommodations: 10% increase in travelers staying overnight in paid accommodations

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number Discover Lewis County depends on lodging tax dollars to increase the numbers impacted by advertising. Lodging tax dollars and advertising allow us to reach individuals that do not know about Lewis County. Once we drive the traffic to our new website they can learn about hikes, lodging, events and more.

a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in unpaid accommodations: 10% increase in travelers who stay overnight in unpaid accommodations

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number The Lewis County Tourism Enhancement Project may directly result in more overnight campers in unpaid accommodations. While not all travellers stay in Lewis County even those who are passing through or just on a day hike make an impact on the tourism economy when they spend their dollars locally. Advertising to these folks will help to increase the overall tourism economy.

10. Describe how the project provides short-term or long-term economic benefit for Lewis County DLC's short-term economic benefit is as a resource where visitors can learn about what there is to do and see in Lewis County. Our long-term economic benefit is in becoming a far-reaching and recognizable brand that guides you to where you can find the information you need to plan your family vacation to Lewis County.

11. Explain what plans exist to allow this project to become self-sustaining. Include any plans for ticket sales, event sponsors, and other cost-recovery models. Discover Lewis County pursues every opportunity for grants and other funding models. We use these funds to support our marketing budget and reach new audiences. In 2020, we received additional grant funding from Centralia Lodging Tax and the Port of Seattle Tourism Marketing Support Program. For 2021, we hope to seek additional private and public partnerships to assist with growing our marketing opportunities.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Website address <https://discoverlewiscounty.com>

Facebook user name <https://www.facebook.com/discoverlewiscounty>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/discoverlewiscounty>

Any other social media platforms your organization uses to promote tourism

TikTok @DiscoverLewisCounty

BUDGET

Amount	10,000
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Source	Port of Seattle Grant
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Confirmed	No
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Date available	January 1, 2021
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Income 2

Income 3

Income 4

Income 5

Income 6

Expense - Personnel

County	30000
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Other Funds	0
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Total	30000
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Expense - Administration

County	0
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Other Funds	0
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Total	0
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Expense - Marketing/promotion

County	48000
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Other Funds	0
Total	40000
Expense - Direct sales activities	
County	0
Other Funds	0
Total	0
Expense - Minor equipment	
County	0
Other Funds	0
Total	0
Expense - Travel	
County	1500
Other Funds	0
Total	1500
Expense - Contract services	
County	0
Other Funds	0
Total	0
Expense - Other activities	
County	0
Other Funds	0
Total	0
Total Cost	
County	79500
Other Funds	0

Total	79500
Priority 1	Fully funding the project would allow us to do all 4 projects described in this application
Full Funding Request	79500
Priority 2	60000
Minimum Funding Request	40000
Applicant will / can accept no less than this amount	40000
If partial funding is received, how will that affect the project / activity? Please describe:	The Lewis County Tourism Enhancement project can be adjusted to what the LTAC board approves for funding. Choosing 40,000 as a no less than number allows for each of the projects to still have reach while helping to fund the program.

PROJECT TIMELINE / TOURISM SEASON

What is your anticipated timeline for accomplishing this activity?	2021
Year-round	Yes
Year-round Explanation	Discover Lewis County is a year-round tourism promotion site

Financial Review

Balance sheet	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701328
Income statement	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701329
Operating budget for 2020	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701330
Projected budget for 2021	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701331

Financial review

Financial review	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701332
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Nonprofit determination

Nonprofit determination	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701333
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Personnel list

Personnel list	https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9002701334
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Signature



(Print or type applicant's name)

Tamara Hayes

Date

Oct 07, 2021
