

Form Name:	Lodging Tax Application
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IP Address:	50.123.6.233
Unique ID:	675459252
Location:	34.861499786377, -114.51930236816

## ORGANIZATION / PROJECT INFORMATION

<b>Organization name</b>	East Lewis County Chamber of Commerce
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<b>Project name</b>	Chamber Manager
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<b>Project coordinator</b>	N/A
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<b>Amount requested from Lewis County</b>	15000
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<b>Total project amount</b>	15000
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## APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

<b>Name</b>	Caro Johnson, ELC Chamber Secretary, or Dr. Brad Larsen, ELC President
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<b>Street address</b>	PO Box 10 Morton, WA 98356
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<b>Mailing address (if different from street address)</b>	N/A
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<b>Current home phone</b>	(360) 430-8482
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<b>Current work phone</b>	(360) 430-8482
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<b>Current cell phone</b>	(360) 520-6878
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<b>Current email address</b>	brad_larsen_2@msn.com
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<b>Agency Tax ID Number</b>	910730233
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<b>Organization Unified Business Identifier (UBI)</b>	601395047
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<b>UBI expiration date</b>	June 30, 2021
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<b>Type of organization:</b>	501(c)6
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<b>Organization's mission statement or purpose (one or two sentences):</b>	"Improve the Vitality and Livability of East Lewis County"
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<b>Year the organization was founded:</b>	2001
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<b>Has your organization received Lewis County lodging tax funding in the past?</b>	Yes
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When did your organization receive Lewis County lodging tax funding?	2020
How much did your organization / project receive?	12000
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.)	All spring and summer events were cancelled this year in Lewis County and East Lewis County due to Covid-19 restrictions imposed by Washington State Governor Jay Inslee. The Summit to Swamp Challenge Weekend was cancelled, and both of the scheduled Bigfoot Archery Shoots had to be cancelled as well, along with the Christmas in the Mountains event in Morton.

## REQUIRED INFORMATION

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name	Staffing for Chamber Manager Position
1. Describe how the project promotes tourism in all of Lewis County's unincorporated areas.	Our goal is to have a paid staff available year round. The hours worked by this person would include promotion of East Lewis County activities on social media, through a strong web presence, and at events and meetings. It would keep the visitors informed though the winter months while allowing the staff to handle the day to day operations of the Chamber and offering tour information to all visitors.
2. Describe how the project will enhance tourism and result in "heads in beds."	While an up-to-date website and social media presence will enhance tourism, face-to-face assistance and guidance is still important to many visitors. The requested funding for staffing hours will ensure visitor assistance is available to them for ALL seasons. It will allow our staff to promote Lewis County events and activities that will increase the likelihood of more visitors and longer stays. Being open through the winter will allow us to collect more lodging dollars due to increased visibility and more off-season activities.
3. List the responsible party / parties.	East Lewis County Chamber of Commerce
4. Describe the area the project will serve, as well as the project's expected impact.	This project will primarily focus on activities in East Lewis County, from the I-5 corridor to White Pass. The goal will be to bring tourists to communities in ELC communities. Many of these tourists will be traveling through the I-5 corridor and US Highway 12 to reach their destinations. Therefore, the far-reaching impact will be to benefit all East Lewis County businesses. By keeping the Chamber open more hours our staff member will be available to assist them in selecting lodging, food options, and other activities of the common traveler.

**5. Describe how the project will specifically promote tourism.**

The consistency of having a staff member employed year-round will allow the ELC Chamber to more actively seek various avenues of promotion and cross-promotion. Having time allocated to place advertisements of events in multiple directories will increase the capability of reaching far beyond the Pacific Northwest. More staff hours will allow for a strong up-to-date web and social media presence.

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

Promotion of these entities via social media, ELC group emails, and/or distribution of materials; Cowlitz River Valley Historical Society, Discover Lewis County, Packwood Improvement Club, Cities of Morton and Mossyrock, Loggers Jubilee, FMAC-Roxy Theater, Blueberry Festival, SW Washington Fair, Apple Harvest Festival, Arbor Health Hospital Foundation, Centralia College, Christmas in the Mountains, and other area entities and organizations.

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**7. Describe why your project should receive funding.**

The ELC Chamber of Commerce is now serving more than 120 members. We have a goal to become financially self-sufficient. The Board is actively collaborating with other entities and events to create annual income streams toward this goal, but currently, we are in need of outside funding for personnel to properly manage our website and social media, and to keep the Chamber functioning well. A bonus would be to keep the CRVHS Visitor Center/Museum open through the off seasons.

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

The ELC Chamber would be available to help residents and businesses in the area by providing updates of the situation, researching, gathering and distribution of important information, and helping to pass out and deliver PPE to those in need. The Chamber staff would be point person for contact with other Chambers, City and Government officials, and all person tasked with the gathering of information in the event of a crisis or continued Covid-19 restrictions so we can all work together.

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## **USE OF HOTEL / MOTEL TAX**

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

TOURISM PROMOTION  
OPERATION OF TOURISM-RELATED FACILITY

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

This funding would supply personnel to help run the ELC Chamber efficiently and effectively. This would result in better promotion of the ELC Chamber members businesses, plus promotion of events and activities throughout East Lewis County and the surrounding areas. This would also provide for staffing to keep the Visitor Center/Museum/Depot in Morton open through the off-season, which could help the Museum and Depot become regular tourist destination. Measuring the dollar amount of the result is difficult because this past year was the first year the Visitor Center, Interpretive Center Museum, Depot and Mt. View Timberland Pop-Up Library in Morton has operated in unison to draw visitors to the area, and due to Covid-19 mandates, we were forced to be closed for several months, and consequently there was little to no tourism as the closures were state and county wide. This left us little knowledge on how to proceed for this year. It is our hope and our goal that increasing promotional efforts will lead to increased visits and increased traffic and lodging to all East Lewis County.

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**Total number of attendees predicted to attend:** Over 2,000

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**Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number**

This estimated prediction is based on the number of visitors that signed the Visitor Center guestbook between the months of March through September in 2019. The Visitor Center had just reopened in March 2019. The numbers from visitors in 2020 are not an accurate reflection due to Covid-19. There were 490 groups consisting of 956 people who came to get information, visit the Museum/Depot, or both. LTAC funding would allow further promotion and staffing to keep the Visitor Center open through the winter season. Consistent and reliable hours of operation are important to tourist activities.

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

Over 1,200

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

From March to September 2019, approximately 2/3 of the visitor groups at the Visitor Center in Morton came over 50 miles or more. The estimated projection is based on this data. Consistent year-round staffing would allow for proactive planning and promotion of prior season events and activities to significantly increase tourist activity. Chamber staffing at the Visitor Center could help with data collection and documentation to help with grant funding from other sources as well. More data will help us all determine where best to put future funding helping to keep the Visitor Center open year-round, which should be a priority.

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**a. Projected number of participants who will travel from another country or state to attend:** Over 800

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<b>b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number</b>	Over 40% of the groups who came to the Visitor Center/Museum since it opened in March, 2019 were from out of state or a different country. Even though much information can be found online, it is still important to have a human presence available to answer questions, to help visitors feel welcome to our communities, and to guide them in having the best experience as possible during their visit. LTAC funding would allow East Lewis County to have both: a great promotional online presence AND a friendly, helpful person to assist them in the Visitor Center.
<b>a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in paid accommodations:</b>	Over 500
<b>b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number</b>	Based on answers from the Visitor Center/Museum guest book in this same time period of March to September, 2019, over 27% of the people visiting planned to stay overnight in Lewis County. There are so many activities available in East Lewis County in addition to the community events, that it would take weeks to try to do them all. We believe that additional staffing hours could be used to raise the awareness of these activities and lodging options for people who are online planning their trips, resulting in more travelers choosing our area as a destination rather than just passing through.
<b>a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in unpaid accommodations:</b>	Unsure
<b>b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number</b>	East Lewis County has many outdoor activities and free places for people to camp or park their RV. While we really have no way to track the number of visitors who stay in unpaid lodging, we feel it is safe to assume that increased promotion will increase the number of visitors to our area resulting in increased revenue for the businesses in our communities. Web and social media promotion are quite effective at getting people's attention, but it takes time to do this properly. Having paid staff hours dedicated to building and maintaining a strong, informative, exciting internet presence is essential. With funding, much of the behind-the-scenes preparation could be done in the off-season while also keeping the doors open at the Chamber and Visitor Center/Museum.
<b>10. Describe how the project provides short-term or long-term economic benefit for Lewis County</b>	The East Lewis County Chamber has several activities planned including The Winter Gala and Award Dinner, the East Lewis County Quilt Show, and the Community Picnic. We host monthly meetings with members from Packwood to Salkum and share information about events, opportunities and activities bringing visitors to our area. Some of these events will be two-day events requiring an overnight stay in paid lodging.

**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.**

The East Lewis County Chamber has several activities planned including The Winter Gala and Award Dinner, the East Lewis County Quilt Show, and the Community Picnic. We host monthly meetings with members from Packwood to Salkum and share information about events, opportunities and activities.

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

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<b>Website address</b>	www.https://elcchabmer.org
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<b>Facebook user name</b>	Visit East Lewis County
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<b>Instagram</b>	N/A
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<b>Twitter account name</b>	N/A
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<b>Any other social media platforms your organization uses to promote tourism</b>	Although we are not currently utilizing Instagram or Twitter, the Chamber plans to set up both accounts prior to the end of October to help promote our upcoming events and to increase tourism. Plans have been made for some training and set up ideas for the Chamber Manager for later this month. The Chamber also utilizes the East Lewis County Journal as a valid means of advertising on a regular basis beginning this year, and the Highway Shopper for additional customer outreach.
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## **BUDGET**

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<b>Amount</b>	5500
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<b>Source</b>	Membership Dues
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<b>Confirmed</b>	No
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<b>Date available</b>	Pending on Covid-19 restrictions
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### **Income 2**

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<b>Amount</b>	500
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<b>Source</b>	East Lewis County Quilt Show
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<b>Confirmed</b>	No
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<b>Date available</b>	Scheduled for April 23 & 24, 2021
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### **Income 3**

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**Income 4**

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**Income 5**

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**Income 6**

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**Total Income** 6000

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**What percentage of your project does your request for Tourism Promotion Dollars represent?** Approximately 82%

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**Expense - Personnel**

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**County** 15000

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**Other Funds** 744

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**Total** 15744

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**Expense - Administration**

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**County** 0

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**Other Funds** 744

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**Total** 744

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**Expense - Marketing/promotion**

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**County** 1438

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**Other Funds** 1437

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**Total** 2875

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**Expense - Direct sales activities**

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**County** N/A

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**Other Funds** N/A

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**Total** 0

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**Expense - Minor equipment**

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**County** N/A

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<b>Other Funds</b>	N/A
<b>Total</b>	N/A
<b>Expense - Travel</b>	
<b>County</b>	N/A
<b>Other Funds</b>	1000
<b>Total</b>	1000
<b>Expense - Contract services</b>	
<b>County</b>	N/A
<b>Other Funds</b>	1000
<b>Total</b>	1000
<b>Expense - Other activities</b>	
<b>County</b>	N/A
<b>Other Funds</b>	500
<b>Total</b>	500
<b>Total Cost</b>	
<b>County</b>	16438
<b>Other Funds</b>	4681
<b>Total</b>	21119
<b>Priority 1</b>	Full Funding
<b>Full Funding Request</b>	15000
<b>Priority 2</b>	Partial Funding
<b>Minimum Funding Request</b>	12000
<b>Applicant will / can accept no less than this amount</b>	10000
<b>If partial funding is received, how will that affect the project / activity? Please describe:</b>	Staffing hours will be reduced and the Chamber will use volunteer hours.

## PROJECT TIMELINE / TOURISM SEASON

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What is your anticipated timeline for accomplishing this activity?

Fiscal year 2021

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Year-round

Yes

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Year-round Explanation

Continual, consistent staffing will help promote tourism in every season!

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## Financial Review

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Balance sheet

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472769>

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Income statement

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472770>

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Operating budget for 2020

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472771>

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Projected budget for 2021

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472772>

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## Financial review

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Financial review

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472773>

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## Nonprofit determination

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Nonprofit determination

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472774>

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## Personnel list

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Personnel list

<https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007472775>

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Signature



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(Print or type applicant's name)

Cynthia K. Swift

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Date

Oct 08, 2020

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