

Form Name:	Lodging Tax Application
Submission Time:	October 8, 2020 10:50 am
Browser:	Chrome 85.0.4183.121 / Windows
IP Address:	66.235.49.87
Unique ID:	675448592
Location:	46.574600219727, -122.908203125

ORGANIZATION / PROJECT INFORMATION

Organization name	White Pass Country Historical Society
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Project name	Packwood Visitor Center
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Project coordinator	Martha Garoutte
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Amount requested from Lewis County	70000
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Total project amount	72000
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APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Martha Garoutte
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Street address	12990 US Hwy 12 Packwood, WA 98361
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Mailing address (if different from street address)	PO Box 958 Packwood, WA 98361
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Current home phone	(360) 494-4031
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Current work phone	(360) 494-4422
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Current cell phone	(360) 496-1519
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Current email address	GAROUTTEMARTHA@GMAIL.COM
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Agency Tax ID Number	205308985
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Organization Unified Business Identifier (UBI)	602655471
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UBI expiration date	October 31, 2021
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Type of organization:	501(c)3
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Organization's mission statement or purpose (one or two sentences):	To capture, preserve & disseminate the history of the upper Cowlitz Valley, through educational programs, tours and displays.
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Year the organization was founded:	2006
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Has your organization received Lewis County lodging tax funding in the past?	Yes
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When did your organization receive Lewis County lodging tax funding? 2020

How much did your organization / project receive? \$65,000

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.) Following the COVID-19 Washington State mandates the Packwood Visitor Center was closed from March until May 30. Money earmarked for salaries from the period of March 17 through May 29 were not used. This amount is estimated to be \$ 6,000, 5 days a week for 6 hours a day times minimum wage plus payroll taxes.

REQUIRED INFORMATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project name Operation of the Packwood Visitor Center

1. Describe how the project promotes tourism in all of Lewis County's unincorporated areas. The Packwood Visitor Center has a variety of materials, such as maps, updated Event schedules, WiFi access and a Discover Lewis County kiosk shared with tourists which covers all of the Lewis County area. The COVID-19 Washington State mandates have limited the number of people gathering. It has therefore been of great importance that the Packwood Visitor Center has kept current on activities through the use of the internet and media from Mount Rainier National Park, the White Pass Ski Resort, the White Pass Scenic Byway, the Cowlitz Valley Ranger District, Washington State DOT and community events and programs.

2. Describe how the project will enhance tourism and result in "heads in beds." The Packwood Visitor Center's main goal is to promote tourism and assist visitors year-round. To that end, advertising activities, businesses, available lodging and events in Packwood and Lewis County at large will be accomplished by web and social media promotions, sharing of updated information, and by providing person to person direct contact with tourists. By having the visitor center open consistently, we are able to provide for visitors' needs and encourage them to extend their stay. According to our documentation 54% of or visitors stayed locally.

3. List the responsible party / parties. The White Pass Country Historical Society Board and Officers in cooperation with the Packwood Visitor Center Employees and volunteers

4. Describe the area the project will serve, as well as the project's expected impact.

Our Packwood Visitor Center is located in a very unique area. We are located a short distance from Mount Rainier National Park, surrounded by the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, next to the Cowlitz River and tributaries, just off The White Pass Scenic By-way, near Wilderness areas with trail and climbing opportunities. The Visitor Center provides necessary current information for tourists seeking to enjoy the out of doors and needing lodging and services to extend their stay year-round. Many visitors are unable to access internet services, thus it is critical that they are able to stop at the Visitor Center and interact with our staff.

5. Describe how the project will specifically promote tourism.

The Packwood Visitor Center's main goal is to promote tourism and assist visitors year-round. To that end, , available lodging, advertising activities, businesses and events in Packwood and Lewis County at large will be accomplished by web and social media promotions, sharing of updated information, and by providing person to person direct contact with tourists. By having the Visitor Center open consistently, we are able to provide for visitors needs and encourage them to extend their stay.

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

It has been an unusual year with many events, programs, and meetings cancelled. We have worked with local organizations and artists and have been ready to assist with activities that sadly had to be cancelled. We are ready to continue working with the Packwood Cultural Council, Discover Lewis County, Mount Rainier National Park, the White Pass Ski Resort, the U.S. Forest Service, the White Pass Scenic Byway, the Packwood Improvement Club, the White Pass Country Museum and other entities when schedules return to normal.

7. Describe why your project should receive funding.

The Packwood Visitor Center has weathered an unprecedented year. As soon as State mandates allowed, the Packwood Visitor Center reopened to assist tourists. Even with restrictions in place, tourists travelled to our more open (rural) area. The Packwood Visitor Center is located in a perfect location as it sits on the edge of US Hwy 12. Foot traffic from nearby lodging, coffee shop, the farmers market, the library, and other businesses welcome tourists to our center. The staff provides visitors with maps, brochures, updated schedules of events, free WiFi access and a Discover Lewis County Kiosk as to available lodging, open businesses and planned activities. Although the Visitor Center did not receive as many world-wide tourists this spring and summer, a record number of visitors from across the United States did stop in for updated information. The visitor count through August 30th was 2897. The people manning the Visitor Center provide a greatly needed one on one service for tourists.

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

The Packwood Visitor Center will and does provide social distancing, the wearing of masks, and cleaning of surfaces to keep our visitors and staff safe. The newly created website will allow for improved on-line contact along with social media site responses. The Visitor Center has an outdoor bulletin board where staff posts current information for visitors, such as camp ground closures, road and trail reports and fire restrictions.

USE OF HOTEL / MOTEL TAX

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

TOURISM PROMOTION
OPERATION OF TOURISM-RELATED FACILITY

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

The projected visitor count in 2021 is approximately 15,000, if Memorial Day and Labor Day Flea Marts are able to be held. On average an overnight tourist will buy breakfast, 2 lunches, and 2 dinners that, with the cost of lodging, will have each tourist spend approximately \$205 in Packwood. There will be additional monies left in Lewis County as those tourists travel down US Hwy12, and onto I-5.

Total number of attendees predicted to attend:

15,000

Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number

Lodging tax dollars allow for the operational costs to serve visitors. Having direct contact with tourists is invaluable. Advertising dollars will provide marketing of the Packwood Visitor Center as a destination point for current travel information.

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

10,000

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

Almost all of our visitors have traveled more than 50 miles due to our remote location. We will advertise our facility in venues beyond the 50 mile marker.

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

8,000

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

Our website and social media presence will keep Packwood in the forefront of travelers looking at the area. Mount Rainier National Park is also increasing their partnership efforts with gateway communities and will be looking to us to help them promote our area to draw people away from the overcrowded Nisqually entrance.

a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in paid accommodations: 10,000

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number By receiving lodging tax dollars, the Packwood Visitor Center can be fully staffed. The staff will help find and book lodging. Approximately 60% of visitors that come into the center have spent the night in paid accommodations. Visitors that are just driving through or visiting for a day are encouraged to return. Information is shared with them on lodging available for their next trip to our mountain area.

a. Projected number of participants who will stay overnight in unpaid accommodations: 4,000

b. Describe how receiving lodging tax dollars would increase that number The staff at the Packwood Visitor Center encourages tourists to stay in available lodging for their next visit.

10. Describe how the project provides short-term or long-term economic benefit for Lewis County Short term economic benefits for Lewis County are realized in the increased traffic from the east and west on US Highway 12. Increased need for rest stops, fuel, meals, etc. are a given with the distance of Packwood from Yakima, Chehalis, Tacoma, Seattle. Portland and beyond. Long term economic benefits for Lewis County include increased awareness of all that Lewis County has to offer throughout the year and reasons to plan a next trip. The Packwood Visitor Center represents all of 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. The Packwood Visitor Center is not a revenue making venture. All of Lewis County benefits from the Packwood Visitor Center being consistently open with skilled and informed staff to suggest lodging availability, help plan trips, and share information on county-wide events and activities.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Website address packwoodvisitorcenter.com

Facebook user name Facebook.com/pkwdvisitorcenter

BUDGET

Amount \$70,000

Source Lewis County LTAC Funds

Confirmed No

Date available	When received
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Income 2

Amount	\$1,000
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Source	Public Donations
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Confirmed	No
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Date available	When received
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Income 3

Amount	\$1,000
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Source	Sales of merchandise
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Confirmed	No
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Date available	When received
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Income 4

Income 5

Income 6

Total Income	\$72,000
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What percentage of your project does your request for Tourism Promotion Dollars represent?	97%
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Expense - Personnel

County	\$52,300
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Other Funds	\$ 0.0
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Total	\$ 52,300
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Expense - Administration

County	\$10,800
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Other Funds	\$1,000
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Total	\$ 11,800
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Expense - Marketing/promotion

County	\$ 3,700
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Other Funds	\$ 0
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Total	\$3,700
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Expense - Direct sales activities

County	\$ 0
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Other Funds	\$ 1,000
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Total	\$ 1,000
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Expense - Minor equipment

County	\$ 2,000
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Other Funds	\$ 0
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Total	\$ 2,000
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Expense - Travel

County	\$ 0
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Other Funds	\$ 0
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Total	\$ 0
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Expense - Contract services

County	\$ 1,200
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Other Funds	\$ 0
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Total	\$ 1,200
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Expense - Other activities

County	\$ 0
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Other Funds	\$ 0
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Total	\$ 0
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Total Cost

County	\$ 70,000
Other Funds	\$ 2,000
Total	\$ 72,000
Priority 1	Full funding of the Packwood Visitor Center
Full Funding Request	\$ 70,000
Priority 2	Barebones funding request
Minimum Funding Request	\$65,000
Applicant will / can accept no less than this amount	\$1
If partial funding is received, how will that affect the project / activity? Please describe:	Most of our request is for staff salaries and operational expenses. This request is for basic services. Partial funding will mean decreased tourist contact.

PROJECT TIMELINE / TOURISM SEASON

What is your anticipated timeline for accomplishing this activity?	Calendar Year 2021. We anticipate having the visitor center open 7 days a week and closed only on major holidays. This is a year-round effort to increase tourism county-wide.
Year-round	Yes
Year-round Explanation	Packwood Visitor Center will be open, we will keep the website and Facebook updated
Off-season	Yes
Off-season Explanation	Packwood Visitor Center open shorter hours
Shoulder season	Yes
Shoulder season Explanation	Packwood Visitor Center open shorter hours
High season	Yes
High season Explanation	Memorial Day - Labor Day, expanded hours
Is it a seasonal activity appropriate to its location? Explain	The Packwood Visitor Center is open year round advertising seasonal, local and county wide activities and assisting tourists by providing them with current information.

Financial Review

Balance sheet <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339221>

Income statement <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339222>

Operating budget for 2020 <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339223>

Projected budget for 2021 <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339224>

Financial review

Financial review <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339225>

Nonprofit determination

Nonprofit determination <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339226>

Personnel list

Personnel list <https://www.formstack.com/admin/download/file/9007339227>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Signature



(Print or type applicant's name) Martha Garoutte

Date Oct 08, 2020
