

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT FOR VOTERS' PAMPHLET

The fishing village of Charleston and the surrounding area (the "Charleston Area") is a popular tourist destination on the Southern Oregon Coast. Visitors coming to the area often stay in short-term lodging accommodations such as RV parks, campgrounds, motels and vacation rentals while enjoying the area's many recreational opportunities. While the neighboring cities of Coos Bay and North Bend have imposed a tax on such short-term lodging accommodations, to date there has not been a local lodging tax charged to visitors to the Charleston Area.

The proposed 9.5% tax on short-term lodging in the Charleston Area would mirror the tax imposed by the cities of Coos Bay and North Bend, and allow the Charleston Area to promote tourism in the area. In 2019, tourism in Coos County was a \$277.3 million industry and employed approximately 3,363 residents. Increasing tourism in the area will assist not only lodging properties, but restaurants, shops, and attractions in Charleston and Coos County in general.

All revenues generated by the 9.5% lodging tax will be spent to benefit the Charleston Area and Coos County as follows:

1. Under state law, 70% of the revenue must be used for tourism promotion and tourism facilities in the Charleston Area. It is anticipated that these funds will primarily support the following major projects:
 - a. Charleston Visitor Center – currently Charleston's visitor center is located in an old laundromat, and is relatively hidden behind the bridge leading into the community. It is managed and manned completely by volunteers. It is anticipated that the lodging tax will allow the Charleston community to build or renovate a facility that better reflects the area, is more visible to travelers to the area, and would allow for a paid staff to ensure the facility and volunteers are managed adequately.
 - b. Participation in the Coos Bay-North Bend Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) aka Oregon's Adventure Coast – a portion of the funds collected would be used toward the activities of the VCB to promote the Charleston area as a tourism destination. This additional funding would allow the VCB to increase its promotion and marketing activities to bring more visitors to the area to participate in recreation, dine in local restaurants, and spend money in Charleston's quaint shops.
2. Under state law, the remaining 30% of the revenue may be retained by Coos County. By ordinance, Coos County has committed to placing this revenue into a dedicated fund for two purposes. First, Coos County may use the revenue to fund public safety programs. The County currently expends significant public safety resources in the Charleston Area. The proposed tax will aid in these critical efforts. Second, Coos County may also use tax revenue for operating a voluntary program for the removal and disposal of unsightly and unsanitary solid waste accumulations, derelict structures, abandoned mobile homes, and other similar blight.