



## MASON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY SALES TAX PROPOSITION

Proposition:

Local Sales and Use Tax for Criminal Justice Purposes

The Board of Mason County Commissioners adopted Resolution 41-19, concerning a sales and use tax increase pursuant to RCW 82.14.450. If approved, this proposition would authorize Mason County to impose an additional sales and use tax of 0.3% split between Mason County (60%) and the City of Shelton (40%) as required by state law. Proceeds shall be used exclusively for criminal justice purposes in accordance with RCW 82.14.450.

Should this proposition be Approved / Rejected?

Requires a simple majority of voter approval to pass.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is a Public Safety Sales Tax for Criminal Justice Purposes?
  - It is a sales and use tax authorized under RCW 82.14.450 for up to 0.3%.
  - Mason County will use all monies received solely for criminal justice services.
  - Mason County is working to improve Public Safety by supporting:
    - the current jail facility
    - review of a new jail facility
    - new mental health and reentry services
    - new pretrial services
    - new alternatives to sentencing programs
    - new reentry to citizenship programs for released inmates
    - needed staffing for the criminal justice system
2. Why is Mason County putting “A Public Safety Sales and Use Tax for Criminal Justice Purposes” on the ballot for a vote of the citizens on August 6, 2019?
  - In 2018 Mason County had almost 5,000 active warrants on offenders that we could not serve because the jail is full.
  - In 2018, Mason County was unable to incarcerate 250 people because the jail is full
  - Today that number is 3500 people we were unable to incarcerate.
  - The Mason County Jail Facility was built in 1987-88 with a Design capacity of 45 inmates. Today, after several modifications, it has a Rated capacity of 93. Due to physical facility space, correctional classifications, operational limitations and lack of adequate staffing the jail can only operate efficiently, effectively and safely at its Functional capacity of 80 inmates.



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- In 2015 – 2016 the County jail’s average daily inmate population was 130.25.
  - The Sheriff, who is responsible for jail operations, implemented jail booking restrictions in 2017 to limit the jail inmate population in order to maintain custody, security and control of the facility in a safe, efficient and constitutional manner.
  - Due to the booking restrictions the average daily general population of the jail in 2018 was 80 inmates, plus 11 on Electronic home Monitoring, plus 10 on work release/inmate labor crew for a total of 101 in custody inmates, a rate 30% below previous levels.
  - Short term these funds would be used to re-fund four jail staff and provide additional staffing to facilitate transport for limited remote prisoner housing and Court Services.
  - Long term these funds would be reserved to help fund the construction and staffing of a larger jail facility.
3. What is the problem Mason County seeks to solve with the proposed sales tax increase?
- The County needs to increase jail staffing maintain adequate personnel to maintain custody, security and control of the jail in a safe, efficient and constitutional manner.
  - Impact the ability in incarcerate and hold accountable individuals who victimize our citizens and pose a threat to the safety of the citizens who line in our community.
  - To add additional Corrections Deputies, to facilitate limited inmate remote incarceration and provide transportation to remotely located court facilities.
  - There are programs the County would like to start but has no funding available to reduce the rate of recidivism.
  - There are a number of programs the County would like to implement to assist the criminal justice system with alternatives to sentencing and relieve the pressure on the entire criminal justice process.
4. Who recommended this revenue source as a fix for the criminal justice system underfunding?
- Mason County Citizens Budget Advisory Committee,
  - Mason County Criminal Justice Working Team Committee,
  - Mason County Criminal Justice and Public Safety Advisory Committee,
5. Why should we vote for this because some of us live in Shelton and do not use County Public Safety?
- The citizens of Shelton receive 40% of the revenue from this tax which will be used by the City of Shelton to supplement its police and criminal justice programs.



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6. Can these funds be used for anything other than Public Safety?
- Per RCW 82.14.450 one-third of the revenue from this tax can only be used for Criminal Justice purposes but the County has defined where these funds will be spent below, all, on criminal justice programs.
7. What will these funds be spent on?
- |   |           |     |                |
|---|-----------|-----|----------------|
| Additional Correction Deputies +6 FTE's | \$430,000 | 33% | Corrections    |
| Mental Health Peer & Reentry Svcs       | \$200,000 | 16% | Courts         |
| Jail Funding/Improvement Reserve        | \$150,000 | 12% | Corrections    |
| District Court +2 FTE                   | \$140,000 | 11% | Courts         |
| Inmate Outsourcing                      | \$100,000 | 8%  | Corrections    |
| Pre Trial Services +1 FTE               | \$ 80,000 | 6%  | Courts         |
| Public Defense Paralegal +1 FTE         | \$ 70,000 | 5%  | Public Defense |
| Clerk +1 FTE                            | \$ 70,000 | 5%  | Courts         |
| Prosecutor +.5 FTE                      | \$ 60,000 | 5%  | Prosecutor     |
8. What will be the cost of the sales tax in dollars and cents?
- The Mason County buyer that spends \$100 will pay an additional 30 cents in sales tax.
9. How do we know the funds will be used as promised?
- Revenues from this sales tax would be placed in a dedicated Public Safety Sales Tax Fund.
  - Expenditures out of the fund will be reviewed in the County's annual budget process with complete transparency to the citizens of where the monies are being spent.
10. What happens to the revenue not spent in a fiscal year?
- Funds from the tax will be kept separate from general fund revenue. Funds not expended within a given year will be carried over as a fund balance for future use.
11. Who will pay this sales tax?
- Everyone that shops in Mason County both residents and non-resident vacationers
12. How much revenue will be generated by this sales tax?
- If approved, it is estimated that \$1.3 million will be generated for the County and \$800,000 will be generated for the City of Shelton



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13. How will this affect the County's sales tax rate?

- Currently the sales tax rate for the County is 8.5% it will rise to 8.8%
- The sales tax rate in the City of Shelton of 8.8% will rise to 9.0%

14. What would happen if the voters don't approve this sales tax?

- The jail would remain staffed at its current levels and individuals who should be incarcerated will need to wait their turn.
- The programs planned to assist individuals suffering from mental health, chemical dependency and substance abuse issues, availability to alternatives to sentencing, and prisoner re-entry assistance would not be available.

15. Will I need to pay both the sales and the use taxes?

- The 0.3% sales and use tax is only applied to either the use of goods, or to the sale of materials not both.

16. What services will this tax provided by Mason County?

- A link to a list of departments and a description of the services each provides appears on the County's home page.

17. Where is there additional information?

- The information the County has collected is available on the County website, [www.co.mason.wa.us](http://www.co.mason.wa.us).
- If you have additional questions, please email Frank Pinter at [fpinter@co.mason.wa.us](mailto:fpinter@co.mason.wa.us).