

# Carlton County, MN LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (LOST) REQUEST

## **Proposed Tax Rate**

The proposed tax rate is .05 cents (one half of one percent)

## **Intended use of Revenue (Project Plan)**

The revenue will be used to build a jail serving regional female offenders and male offenders. The current jail has been deemed non-compliant by MN Department of Corrections and issuance of a "Sunset Letter" is pending. Present conditions of confinement are considered unacceptable and a possible violation of inmates' rights threatening the future liability of governmental units. Furthermore, within the region and throughout the state of MN, female offenders are not being provided equal treatment. The new facility will provide gender parity to female offenders with female specific programming as required in M.S. 241.70 Subd. 1: *"Any adult women charged with or convicted of crimes, and juvenile females charged with an offender that would be a crime if committed by an adult or adjudicated delinquents, shall be based upon the special need of the female offenders."* (Parity statute passed in MN in 1981 and amended in 1991 to include juvenile offenders.) The current jail, built in 1979, has a lack of adequate space and beds. The new facility is projected to serve regional demand over next 40 years with 84 beds, twenty-four available for female offenders.

## **Regional Significance and Economic Benefit**

The regional significance and economic benefits include meeting legal demands for gender parity and adequate space to house offenders in humane conditions. If the current facility is not replaced, the costs to Carlton County taxpayers could exceed \$214K month for incarceration, if time and transport are included (80% of inmates would be needed to be boarded out.)

Currently, there is only one female offender program in the 5 county region with total capacity of 10 beds. In 2018, there were 75 residential intakes and 28 short-term intakes. Statistics indicate almost a 50% increase in female offenders of the past 10 years, increasing at almost twice the rate as male offenders. At present, approximately 30% of jail population are female offenders. The State of Minnesota has only one facility designated for females. *(These statistics are being confirmed with MN DOC.)*

To reduce recidivism in both genders, culturally relevant programming along with family-friendly programming will improve outcomes. For females, gender responsive assessment tools can enhance case management efforts with female offenders. Two-third of women in jail are mothers with children under the age of 18. Incarceration and reentry are particularly challenging for justice involved mothers of these minor children. The costs involving women in the criminal justice system can be exceptionally high with consideration of the placement of minor children in out-of-home settings.

The new facility will create a safe environment protecting Carlton County residents, staff and clientele.

## **Amount of Revenue to Be Raised**

**The total project cost is \$40 million.** Bonds will be sold to pay for construction. The bonds will be repaid by ½ cent sales tax and levy dollars. **Total anticipated revenue to be raised annually is \$1.8 million** and throughout 20 year term of sales tax is \$36 million.

## **Anticipated Expiration Date**

Tax will be in effect for 20 years (120 months), or less, after it is first imposed. Exact length of time will be determined by debt satisfaction.