

# YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT GUIDELINES

## PURPOSE OF FUNDS:

The purpose of the York County Improvement Fund is to provide funding that promotes, encourages and attracts visitors to the travel and tourism facilities and attractions within York County. The funds available through this program are provided from the lodging tax revenue fund, and are to be used for capital improvements to new or existing attractions or recreational facilities attracting visitors to York County Nebraska, owned by the public or any non-profit organization, as the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-1245 through 81-1263, et seq. provides. The funds may also be used for marketing/advertising promotion by the York County Visitors Bureau.

## CRITERIA FOR ASSISTANCE:

- ≈ Grants from York County Visitors Improvement Funds shall be available for any visitor attraction in York County owned by the public or any nonprofit organization.
- ≈ Grant applications are due 60 days prior to the start of the project.
- ≈ Grants are discretionary, based on available funds, other anticipated uses, appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use.
- ≈ Grant funds must be used for projects that will attract tourists (principally those resulting in overnight stays) to York County that would not otherwise come to York County.
- ≈ Grant funds must only be used for seed money to help get projects that the York County Visitors Bureau (YCVB) determines to be worthy, started. Grant funds must be viewed only as assistance for a project, and never to be considered as full funding for any project.
- ≈ Grants will not normally be given in any amount over 25% of a project. In the case of a project that the York County Visitors Bureau (YCVB) deems to be very exceptional, funding may be granted up to, but not exceeding 50% of a project. All funding will be at the sole discretion of the YCVB, subject to approval by the York County Commissioners.
- ≈ Grant exclusions: No part of the grant fund may be used for: general operating expenses, additional or current personnel salaries, supplies and equipment, general maintenance or replacement of an existing structural component in an existing facility, items not included in the approved grant application, in any manner that would violate the Nebraska Visitor Development Act, NEB. REC. STAT. 81-1245 through 81-1263 et seq. All grants are discretionary, based upon available funds, other anticipated uses and appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use.
- ≈ Applicants must present a detailed business plan that shows projections for all construction operational expenses. Business plans must show promotional plans for keeping the project occupied and utilized.
- ≈ Grant applications must show realistic projections for the number of overnight stays to be expected by the creation of the project, and how the projections were determined.
- ≈ Funding for a project will take place only if and when the YCVB is assured that the project will follow through on its projections. The grant applicant must demonstrate to the YCVB that the balance of the required funds for construction, are in place, as well as demonstrating that the on-going operational, maintenance and promotional plans are viable.
  - YCVB must be reasonably certain that the proposed project will not become a tax liability to York County.
- ≈ The proceeds of the York County Visitor Improvement Fund shall be used to IMPROVE NEW OR EXISTING visitor attractions and facilities in York County, except that no proceeds shall be used to improve a facility in which

parimutuel wagering is conducted.

- ≈ The grantee will obtain all necessary local and state permits.
- ≈ Grant applicants must complete the attached grant application, and include a copy of the completed cover sheet, project description, project deadline, project budget, contractor bids and proof of nonprofit status and letters of support from two or more entities that will benefit from the project.
- ≈ 90 days after the project completion, a report must be submitted to the YCVB, along with all receipts, giving the final results.
- ≈ Grant projects funded through the Improvement Fund must be completed within 24 months of the date of application approval, unless written authorization of deadline extension is received from York County Visitors Bureau and York County Commissioners.
- ≈ Permanent, visible acknowledgment will be placed within any facility receiving York County Visitors Bureau Visitor Improvement Funds over \$2,500 to assist with facility improvements.

#### **NOTE:**

Those applying for grants will need to visit with the Executive Director of the YCVB to discuss their project and receive the official application form prior to submitting an application to the YCVB Board of Directors. A representative of the entity submitting an application for Visitor Improvement Funds will be requested to make a personal presentation to the YCVB Board of Directors and County Commissioners upon submission of their application.

#### **CONTRACT:**

All award applicants (grantee) are subject to entering into a contract detailing each party's obligations with York County Visitors Bureau (grantor). If the parties are unable to enter into a mutually agreeable contract, then the awarded grant will be disallowed.

#### **PAYMENT:**

Upon receipt and acceptance of the final project report or the year-end progress report, the York County Visitors Bureau will submit your claims and request a check from the York County Clerk for the payment of grant funds. This check will be sent by the Clerk directly to the grantee or vendor based on prior arrangements.

The York County Visitors Bureau can only use proceeds from the Improvement Fund to fund any project herein and shall not obligate itself to use any money outside the Improvement Fund to fund any project herein. Furthermore, the York County Visitors Bureau shall not give multi-year grants (taking into consideration all other grants that obligate York County to amounts over and above accruing in the Improvement Fund through the collection 2% lodging tax.

## YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Date:

Entity applying for the grant:

Contact Person:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Non-Profit Tax I.D. Number:

Entity applying for the grant is a 501 8) 3: Yes or No?

If No, what type of non-profit is the grantee?

Name, date and location of the improvement:

Describe the improvement:

Total estimated costs:

Total amount of money requested:

\*Please provide a detailed overall budget and business plan of the improvement project with this application.

Describe the current facility, location, expansion and improvement plans, significance to tourism and estimated date of completion.

Who is the target market for this project? What are your projections for attendance, especially overnight stays to be generated by this project? How did you arrive at these figures?

What other agencies or groups are co-sponsoring this project? What amounts are they contributing and when?

PLEASE RETURN GRANT APPLICATIONS TO:

YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

[yorkcountyvisitors@gmail.com](mailto:yorkcountyvisitors@gmail.com)

601 N. LINCOLN AVENUE YORK, NE 68467