



Grant Guidelines and Application for Improvement Fund Grant

PURPOSE OF FUNDS

The purpose of the Red Willow County Improvement Fund grant is to provide funding that improves existing or creates new visitor attractions and facilities in Red Willow County. The funds available through this program are provided from the lodging tax revenue funds. The funds are to be used for capital improvements for area attractions or recreational facilities, attracting visitors to and within Red Willow County, Nebraska, owned by the public or any nonprofit organization, as the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1245 through §81-1263, et seq. (as amended from time to time) provides.

USE OF FUNDS

Improvement Fund Grants shall be used to improve the visitor attractions and facilities owned by the public or any non-profit organization in the county, except that no proceeds shall be used to improve a facility in which pari-mutual wagering is conducted. Multi-year projects will be considered for funding through the Improvement Fund Grant program. Projects with potential to increase the marketability of and draw to Red Willow County will be given priority consideration.

EXCLUSIONS

No part of the grant funds may be used for:

- General operating expenses
- For additional or current personnel salaries
- For supplies and equipment
- For general maintenance or replacement of an existing structural component in an existing facility
- For items not included in the approved grant application
- In any manner that would violate the Nebraska Visitor Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1245 through §81-1263, et seq. (as amended from time to time) provides.

MATCHING FUNDS

Grantee acknowledges that this is a 25/75 matching grant up to the approved amount. Grantee must provide 25% of the approved grant amount which can be half in kind and half cash. For example, for a total project cost of \$15,000, the grant application can be for \$11,250 and the match will be \$3,750. Of the match \$1,875 must be in cash.

NOTE: Nonprofit organizations who cannot meet the match requirement can qualify for grant

funds by including hardship financial documentation in their application, describing their financial situation and budget.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application

Each grant application must include the following:

- Completed Cover Sheet
- Project Description (no more than one page)
- Project Timeline
- Project Budget
- Contractors Bids
- Proof of Non-profit status
- Letters of Support (3)
- For projects that improve or expand publicly owned facilities, a letter of understanding from the government entity must be included with the application.
- Applicant must submit one (1) original and five (5) copies of the entire application. Paper-clip each complete set. Do not staple all six (6) sets together and do not place applications in folders or binders.
- Applications can be mailed to the following address:
Red Willow County Tourism
P. O. Box 147
McCook, NE 69001
Or delivered to the office at: 402 Norris Avenue, Room 318 – McCook, Nebraska

Deadlines

There are two application deadlines each year on July 31 and December 31. The Red Willow County Visitors Committee will meet the second Tuesday of August and January on the second floor of the Keystone Business Center to consider projects for the Improvement Fund Grant. Applications must be in the Red Willow County Tourism office by the deadline date. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS to these deadline dates.

Presentation

- Applicants must be present at the Visitors Committee meeting at which their grant application is reviewed.
- Presentation must not be longer than 20 minutes.

REVIEW PROCESS

Grants are discretionary, based upon available funds, other anticipated uses, appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of the accepted project. Furthermore, said project must continue to comply with the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1245 through §81-1263, et seq. (as amended from time to time).

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD

Notifications will be made by email with grant documents being mailed.

CONTRACT

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

CREDITING REQUIREMENTS

Upon project completion, a permanent sign or plaque acknowledging Red Willow County Tourism support shall be place in a prominent location.

REPORTING, ACCOUNTING AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Reporting

Thirty (30) days after the completion of the project, or the end of the calendar and/or fiscal year for multi-year projects, a report will be submitted to the Red Willow County Visitors Committee giving final results or progress toward results. The fiscal year referenced is July to June, allowing for the possibility of monies being distributed twice a year. The report must outline if the objectives of the project were met, if not, what were the circumstances that lead to the lack of progress. The report will also include copies of all paid receipts. No money will be released until the final report or the end-of-year progress report is presented and approved. No money will be released beyond those expenses documented by paid receipts. If the grantee does not have the funds necessary to pay invoices and wait for reimbursement, a copy of the invoice may be submitted with prior notification to the Red Willow County Tourism office.

Payment

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

The Red Willow County Visitors Committee 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 Visitors Committee shall not give multi-year grants that obligate the Red Willow County Visitors Committee to amounts over and above amounts accruing in the Improvement Fund though the collection of the 2 percent Lodging Tax.

RED WILLOW COUNTY IMPROVEMENT FUND APPLICATION

Name of Organization			
Contact Person		Title	
Address		City	State Zip Code
Telephone	E-mail		
Project Name			
Amount Requested		Estimated Project Cost (attach detailed budget worksheet)	
Please provide a brief description of the project (no more than one page):			
Signature of Applicant: I signify that, if awarded, grant funds will only be used for improvements to visitor attractions owned by the public or any nonprofit organization, as the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, Neb. Rev. Stat. §81-1245 through §81-123, et seq. (as amended from time to time) provides and as outlined in this application.			
Signature:		Date:	
For each grant application, you must include this completed cover sheet, application, budget page, letters of support; contractor bids and proof of nonprofit status.			
Return to: McCook/Red Willow County Tourism P. O. Box 147 McCook, NE 69001 Carol@VisitMcCook.com			

How will this project increase visitation to, or encourage, visitors to stay longer in Red Willow County?

What other agencies or groups are co-sponsoring the project?

How will this improvement benefit Red Willow County?

If this project is not awarded the entire requested amount, will you continue with the project?

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ Completed Cover Sheet | _____ Project Budget | _____ Contractors Bids |
| _____ Completed Application | _____ Project Timeline | _____ Letters of Support (3) |
| _____ Proof of Non-Profit Status and/or Letter of Understanding from Government Entity | | |
| _____ One (1) original and five (5) copies of entire application | | |

**Red Willow County Improvement Fund Grant
Budget Worksheet
(Include contractor bids if applicable)**

Activity	Grant Amount Requested	Match (Cash)	Match (In-Kind)	Source & Brief Description of Match	Total Funds to be Spent on this Grant Project Per Activity
Example: Construction of ABC	11,250	1,875	1,875	Organization budget, volunteer labor	15,000

(Total of first three columns must equal the fifth column total.)