

YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this committee and grant 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 collected via the improvement fund. The funds are to be used for capital improvements to existing attractions or recreational facilities that are open to the public and are of educational, cultural, historical, artistic or recreational significance, and that promote and/or stimulate the York County economy by encouraging overnight stays in hotels, motels, and campgrounds. 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 funds may not be used for on-going operational expenses such as, but not limited to: taxes, utilities, wages, maintenance, etc.
- ~ 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 EXISTING visitor attractions and facilities in York County, except that no proceeds shall be used to improve a facility in which pari-mutuel wagering is conducted.
- ~ The grantee will obtain all necessary local and state permits.
- ~ Grant applicants must complete the attached grant application and letters of support from five or more entities that will benefit from the project, including two letters of support from lodging properties.

- ~ 90 days after the project completion, a report must be submitted to the YCVB, along with all receipts, giving the final results.
- ~ 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:

Applications for grant funding from the VISITOR IMPROVEMENT FUND will be accepted by the YCVB beginning January 2006.

Disbursement of funding monies by the YCVB will begin April 2006.

Tax receipts for the VISITOR IMPROVEMENT FUND will be divided into a 70/30 split. 70% will go towards the capital improvement grants, and 30% will go towards advertising/marketing promotion. The YCVB will maintain separate monthly financial sheets to distinguish between the VISITORS PROMOTION FUNDS.

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 the YCVB Board of Directors upon submission of their application.

YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Date: _____

Entity applying for the grant: _____

Tax I.D. Number: _____

Contact Person: _____

Title _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____

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

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

Name, date and location of the improvement:

(PLEASE PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.)

Describe the improvement:

Total amount of money requested: _____ **Total estimated costs:** _____

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?

PLEASE RETURN GRANT APPLICATIONS TO:

**YORK COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU
601 N. LINCOLN AVENUE
YORK, NE 68467**

FOR QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL: 402-362-4575

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