



York County

VISITORS IMPROVEMENT FUND

Description of Program:

The York County Visitors Bureau serves as an advisory committee to the York County Board of Commissioners and is funded by a 2% lodging tax within the county. The Committee administers this reimbursement grant program, per Nebraska Revised Statutes 81--3717 and 81-3720, to provide expansions or improvement at any existing visitor attraction, acquiring or expanding exhibits for existing visitor attractions, constructing visitor attractions, or planning or developing such expansions, improvements, or construction. The funds may also be used for marketing/advertising promotion by the York County Visitors Bureau per above statutes.

Grants are discretionary, based on available funds, with applicants demonstrating appropriateness and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use for their visitor attractions in the county. Attractions must be owned by the public or a nonprofit organization, with the primary purpose to operate as a visitor attraction. Any grant made for a term of years shall be funded each year in accordance with any agreement contained in the grant contract.

Grant Schedule:

- At least 60 days prior to start of the project - Turn in application and supporting documentation
- Submit application at least 10 days prior to the YCVB monthly meeting to be included in the agenda
- Attend YCVB monthly meeting to present grant application (3rd Wednesday at 7:00am)
- Attend County Commissioners meeting to present grant application (biweekly at 8:30am)
- Sign contract between YCVB and applicant following all criteria and guidelines
- No more than 90 days after completion, submit a written report along with all receipts and proof of payment, giving the final results.

Those applying for grants will need to visit with the Executive Director of the YCVB to discuss their project prior to submitting an application to the YCVB Board. The applicants will be requested to give the board a presentation and answer questions.



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Grant Criteria:

- Grant funds must be used for project that will attract tourists, principally resulting in overnight stays to York County that would not otherwise come to York County.
- Grants must only be used for seed money to help get projects that the 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 may be awarded up to 50%. At the discretion of the advisory board, exceptional applications may be granted more.
- The proceeds of the funds shall be used to improve new or existing visitor attractions and facilities in York County with the exception of facilities conducting parimutuel wagering.
- Funding for a project will take place only if and when the YCVB is assured that the project will follow through on its projections as stated in the application for funding.
- YCVB must be reasonably certain that the proposed project will not become a tax liability to York County.
- The grantee will obtain all necessary local and state permits.
- 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 acknowledgement will be placed within any facility receiving YCVB Improvement Funds over \$2,500 to assist with facility improvements.

The following expenses are NOT eligible for grant funding:

- General operating expenses
- Additional or current personnel salaries
- Supplies and equipment
- General maintenance
- Replacement of an existing structural component in an existing facility
- Items not included in approved grant application, in any manner that would violate the Nebraska Visitor Development Act Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-3701 through 81-3730



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Grant Guidelines:

Along with the application, found below, the applicant must also:

- Provide a project description, deadline, budget, contractor bids, and proof of nonprofit status completed in the application
- Provide at least two letters of support.
- Provide a detailed business plan that shows projections for all construction operational expenses.
- Provide a promotional plan for keeping the project occupied and utilized.
- Provide realistic projections for the number of overnight stays to be expected by the creation of the project, and how the projection were determined.
- Demonstrate to the YCVB that the balance of the required funds for construction are in place, as well as, demonstrating that the ongoing operational, maintenance, and promotional plans a viable.

After YCVB approval, the application must be approved by the York County Commissioners Board to receive funding. Once approved, proposed project funding will be available for 12 or 24 months determined by the board.

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 2% lodging tax.



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VISITORS IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION

Name of Organization:

Organization Status:

Contact Person:

Title:

Mailing Address:

Phone:

Tax ID Number:

Entity apply for the grants is a 501(c)(3): _____ yes _____ no

If no, what type of non-profit is the grantee:

Name, date, and location of the improvement:

Deadline of improvement:

Estimated costs:

Total amount requested:



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VISITORS IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION

Describe the current facility and significance to tourism.

Describe the planned improvements or expansion:

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 provide a detailed overall budget and business plan of the improvement project with this application