

# HITCHCOCK COUNTY

## Grant Guidelines and Application for Improvement Fund Grant

### **PURPOSE OF FUNDS**

The purpose of the Hitchcock County Improvement Fund grant is to provide funding that improves existing or creates new visitor attractions and facilities in Hitchcock 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 Hitchcock 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.

### **MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT**

Funds will be awarded up to \$1,000.00 for approved grants.

### **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 Hitchcock 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 50/50 matching grant up to the approved amount. Grantee must provide 50% 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 \$7,500 and the match will be \$7,500. Of the match, \$3,750 must be in cash.

## **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:

VALERIE PASCHAU  
PO Box 248

Deadline Trenton, NE 681044  
308-340-3411

There are two application deadlines each year on July 31 and December 31. The Hitchcock County Visitors Committee will consider projects for the Improvement Fund Grant during their regularly scheduled meetings on the third Tuesday of August and January. Applications must be submitted to the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee 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 Hitchcock 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 Hitchcock County Tourism support shall be placed 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 year for multi-year projects, a report will be submitted to the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee giving final results or progress toward results. 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 Hitchcock County Visitors Committee.

#### **Payment**

Upon receipt and acceptance of the final project report or the end-of-year progress report, the Hitchcock County Visitors Committee will request a check from the Hitchcock 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 Hitchcock 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 Hitchcock County Visitors Committee to amounts over and above amounts accruing in the Improvement Fund though the collection of the 2 percent Lodging Tax.

HITCHCOCK 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):			
<p>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.</p> <p>Signature: _____ Date: _____</p>			
<p>For each grant application, you must include this completed cover sheet, application, budget page, letters of support, contractor bids and proof of nonprofit status.</p> <p>Return to: <i>VALEKIE PASCHALL</i>  <i>PO Box 248</i>  <i>TRENTON, NE 68044</i>  <i>308 340 3411</i></p>			

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

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

How will this improvement benefit Hitchcock County?

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

**APPLICATION CHECKLIST:**

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

