

CHEYENNE COUNTY VISITORS COMMITTEE

SIDNEY - DALTON - LODGEPOLE - GURLEY - POTTER

Public Meetings every 1st Wednesday, 5pm
 658 Glover Rd., Sidney, NE 69162
 Phone: (308) 254-4030
 info@VisitSidneyNE.com

TOURISM GRANT FUNDING GUIDELINES

PLEASE READ THESE GUIDELINES IN THEIR ENTIRETY AND THEN COMPLETE THE APPLICATION.

The purpose of the Cheyenne County Visitors Committee Grant Program is to provide funding that improves, creates, and promotes visitor attractions in Cheyenne County. The funds are available on a reimbursable grant basis and provided from lodging tax revenue funds. Lodging tax funds are collected based on Nebraska Visitors Development Act Statute 81-3701 through 81-3727. These funds are to be used for promotion and capital improvements of attractions or recreational facilities that attract visitors to Cheyenne County.

Grant funds cannot be used in any manner that would violate the Nebraska Visitors Development Act, NE Stat 81-3701 through 81-3727 (as amended).

Tourism Grant funding is available in four different categories:

Events or Attractions may only apply for one of these grants per event: *promotion, event incentive, or sporting events*. Improvement grants can be requested alone or with any other grants.

Promotion Grant: Used generally for marketing expenses to attract visitors to Cheyenne County for events and attractions within the county.

Suggested Use of Funds	Documents Required	Application Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Event or Attraction advertising to include print, radio/TV, and social media ads * Brochure and Website Creation * Brochure/Poster printing * Advertising signage * Promotional items such as tshirts, cups, etc not to exceed more than 10% of total grant request * <i>Funds are not available for operating costs such as entertainment, social media influencer services, utilities, mileage, rent, prizes, wages, etc.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promotion Grant application ○ Complete detailed marketing & promotional budget ○ Proof of non-profit status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 30 days prior to event date. * Submitted a minimum of 5 business days prior to a scheduled monthly meeting.

Event Incentive Grant: Events that are in their third year or later can apply for this grant to help grow their event to attract new visitors from outside of Cheyenne County. **Grant funds may be approved for up to, and cannot exceed, 20% of total event expenses. Funds are also capped at \$6,000 per event.**

Suggested Use of Funds	Documents Required	Application Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Entertainment, facility and equipment rentals, and marketing expenses * 20% of total grant amount <u>must</u> be used for approved marketing expenses * <i>Funds are not available for utilities, mileage, prizes, wages, social media influencer services, imprinted promotional items, etc.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Event Incentive Grant application ○ Complete detailed expense budget ○ Proof of non-profit status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 30 days prior to event date. * Submitted a minimum of 5 business days prior to a scheduled monthly meeting.

Sporting Events Grant: These grant funds are also used to encourage and support multi-day sporting events that bring visitors to Cheyenne County that have a likelihood of producing overnight stays as well as time to shop in the community.

Suggested Use of Funds	Documents Required	Application Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trophies/Participation Medals * Officiating costs * Promotional costs * <i>Funds are not available for operating costs such as utilities, mileage, fuel, rent, food, wages, insurance, etc. Funding under this grant cannot be a physical improvement to a facility although the facility may qualify for a Tourism Improvement Grant. At no time may the funding be used for cash payouts.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sporting Events Grant application ○ Complete budget ○ Proof of non-profit status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * During planning stages at least 30 days prior to event date. * Submitted a minimum of 5 business days prior to a scheduled monthly meeting.

Improvement Grant: Used for expanding and improving public or non-profit visitor attraction, acquiring or expanding exhibits, constructing, expanding, or improving visitor attractions with the express goal of increasing visitation to that facility. This Improvement Grant is a reimbursable grant. The granted amount will be awarded only upon substantial completion of the project with paid receipts, paid invoices, or canceled checks submitted. Statements of Account will not be accepted. Improvement Grant is valid for one year from date of approval. If an extension is needed, the applicant must submit a request and the committee may approve an extension on a case-by-case basis.

Suggested Use of Funds	Documents Required	Application Deadline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * On premise Signage * Directional Signage * Expansion of existing facilities * New Construction of Visitor Attractions * Improvement of Existing Attractions * <i>Funds are not available for operating costs such as utilities, mileage, rent, wages, insurance, etc.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improvement Grant application ○ Complete budget ○ Proof of non-profit status ○ Written approval for grant application required if project is on city, village, or county property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 3 months prior to project start date for new construction, 30 days prior for improvement projects * Submitted a minimum of 5 business days prior to a scheduled monthly meeting.

This is a reimbursement grant program. Funds will be available after event completion or project is substantially completed (as determined by the CCVC). Copies of paid receipts, advertisings, mailings and completed final project report must be submitted to the Cheyenne County Visitors Committee at the Visitors Center. A Promotion Grant is valid for 60 days after completion of the event or marketing project and an Improvement Grant is valid for one year from date of approval. An extension may be requested and may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

All grants are subject to available funds.

CRITERIA FOR ASSISTANCE

- Grants are available only to public or non-profit organizations. Current proof of non-profit status must be submitted with the application.
- The grant recipient is responsible for obtaining any required local and state licenses and permits as well as collecting applicable taxes.
- A complete project budget must be included in the grant application along with contractor bids, if necessary, as determined by the Visitors Committee.
- **Grants are discretionary, based on available funds, anticipated uses, appropriateness, and anticipated effectiveness of proposed use. Higher consideration may be given to new events or projects over repeat projects.**
- If lodging information is advertised, all lodging facilities in Cheyenne County must be listed. A complete listing of lodging facilities is available at the Cheyenne County Visitors Center or at VisitSidneyNE.com/lodging
- A final project report must be submitted to the Cheyenne County Visitors Committee no later than 60 days after the event or completion of the project. The appropriate Grant Report for Reimbursement must be complete and outline if project objectives were met. If objectives were not met, explain the circumstances. The report must include copies of all paid receipts (a statement of account will not be accepted). No money will be released until the final report is presented and approved; funds will not be released beyond those expenses documented by paid receipts.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Cheyenne County Visitors Committee will review all grant applications at its scheduled monthly meeting. Applicants are required to attend the meeting and will be allotted time for their presentation. A complete budget for the project will be expected at this time. Applicants may be asked to provide the committee with additional information in order to fully understand the grant request.

The Visitors Committee will make a recommendation to the Cheyenne County Board of Commissioners, as soon as practical following the Visitors Committee meeting.

Applicants may be requested to appear before the County Commissioners. Applicants will be notified of grant approval by the Commissioners within 3 days.

REIMBURSEMENT

Within the allotted time after the event or project is completed, the applicant must provide all required documentation and attend a Visitors Committee Meeting to report on the event/project and use of funds. Upon receipt and acceptance of the final project report or the annual progress report and paid receipts, the Visitors Committee will review all materials and will request payment from the Cheyenne County Commissioners for the reimbursement of grant funds. This check will be made out to and mailed to the grantee organization.

All applications must be submitted by noon on the Wednesday preceding the scheduled meeting to be included on that month's agenda. Meetings are generally held at the Visitors Center on the first Wednesday of each month at 5 pm. Applications and questions about grants can be sent to info@VisitSidneyNE.com