

Fiscal Year 2010/11
CLAY COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
GRANT FUNDING GUIDELINES

PURPOSE:

This document sets forth the guidelines and categories for requests for funds from Tourist Development Taxes. Applications for TDC funding will be accepted from **non-profit** organizations that plan to hold events or activities within Clay County that have shown to attract substantial publicity for Clay County or have the potential to attract out-of-town visitors who will occupy overnight accommodations.

The Clay County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) administers the funds collected from the tourist development tax on occupied overnight accommodations, including hotel & motel rooms, campsites and apartment leases of less than six months. The purpose of the tax, as outlined in Florida Statutes Section 125.0104, is to provide funds to implement programs to increase the amount of tourist activity in counties within Florida.

The funds allocated by the Board of Commissioners (BCC) will eventually be returned to the BCC through the collection of tourist development tax dollars generated by overnight stays or from sales tax collected on fuel, meals, retail items, admissions, etc. charged by local merchants.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY/TDC HISTORY:

The Florida State Legislature enacted the Local Option Tourist Development Act (Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes) in response to the growing need of Florida counties to provide additional revenue sources for Tourist Development in an effort to stimulate the local economy. In response to this need, in 1988, the voters of Clay County approved a two (2) percent Tourist Development Tax to be charged on occupied overnight accommodations including hotel and motel rooms, campsites, RV parks and apartment leases of less than six months. A Tourist Development Council (TDC) was also created in 1988 to assist the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) in planning ways in which to use the revenues received through the Tourist Development Tax based on statutory guidelines. The tax was increased to three (3) percent in 1999. In The Clay County Board of County Commissioners has the final determination of the allocation of TDC funds within the confines of F.S. 125.0104.

ALLOCATION OF THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX:

The current percentage breakdown of the tourist development taxes collected monthly in Clay County is 32% to the Thrasher-Horne Center for the Arts; 50% to Grants for Special Events and 18% to Tourism Office Administration and Operations.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW:

The Tourism Office will distribute applications to non-profit organizations that express an interest in receiving funds for Fiscal Year 2010/11. The grant application is also available online and can be accessed from the tourism division homepage at www.exploreclay.com.

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Projects must meet the guidelines and criteria outlined in this document and must apply to event expenses from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011.

Please Note: All grant applications for funding for FY 2010/11 must be received by 12 noon on August 30, 2010. Invoices are only paid on a reimbursement basis, no monies will be distributed up front.

Completed applications may be mailed or hand delivered to Ms. Wanda Mears, TDC Recording Secretary, P.O. Box 1366, 477 Houston Street, Green Cove Springs, FL 32043.

Ms. Mears' office is located in the Planning Division on the 3rd floor of the Clay County Administration Building. The office is open during the hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For further information, telephone (904) 541-3829 or the Tourism Office at (904) 278-3737.

APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURE:

One (1) original and nine (9) copies of the completed and signed grant application should be submitted to Ms. Mears for distribution to the TDC by the established deadline.

Applicants are required to direct all questions regarding their request for funding to the Tourism Office at (904) 278-3737. Applicants are encouraged to not make contact with TDC members or the Clay County Board of Commissioners concerning their grant request.

The Director of Tourism or his/her designee will review all applications to determine if they meet the established criteria for funding. Applications deemed incomplete or lacking sufficient detail will be returned.

TDC members will receive a copy of each grant application and will score them based on approved evaluation criteria (see page 4). TDC members will submit the scores back to staff who will combine and average the scores. At the awards meeting, a preliminary score will have been assigned and TDC members will have an opportunity to confer and ask questions, if desired, of the applicants. The TDC will vote on each qualifying applicant and prepare, in priority order, their recommendations for funding for Fiscal Year 2010-11. Funding recommendations will then be presented to the Clay County Board of County Commissioners for final approval.

Grant requests that are not recommended for funding by the BCC will not be permitted to come back to either the TDC, BCC or County Manager until the following fiscal year.

All materials submitted with applications will become a matter of public record, open to inspection by any citizen of the State of Florida subject to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

OVERALL GUIDELINES

Applications must conform to the guidelines specified by the Tourist Development Council. Applications that do not conform to these guidelines will not be considered for funding. The funding limits are subject to approval by the Tourist Development Council (TDC) who then forwards the funding recommendation(s) to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). As the administrators of the Tourist Development Tax Fund, the BCC may increase or decrease funding and has the final approval or denial of grants.

Use of TDC funding by grant recipients for an activity, service, venue or event must have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists.

One and two-day community special events will be limited to \$1,500. High profile events that attract substantial visitors, publicity or significantly enhance the county's marketability as a tourist destination may be considered for additional funding.

TDC funds used for advertising and promotion of special events must be placed in out-of-Clay County media. This is to ensure that funds will be used to attract event participants who reside outside of Clay County and who may stay at least one night in paid lodging. No media expenditures within Clay County will be reimbursed.

Organizations receiving TDC grant funding are required to have their promotional advertising (print, radio & TV) pre-approved by the Director of Tourism in advance of publication or airing. This pre-approval ensures that "Paid for by Clay County Tourist Development Tax Funds" appears in advertising that will later be submitted for reimbursement. Ad copy or scripts may be faxed to (904) 278-4731 or emailed to: jaclyn.slaybaugh@co.clay.fl.us.

Please contact the Tourism Director at (904) 278-3737 or the TDC Recording Secretary at (904) 541-3829 with any questions concerning allowable reimbursable expenses.

Eligible Organizations

Grants are limited to not-for-profit organizations under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Sponsorship/Special Event Guidelines

1. Event must take place within Clay County and be accessible to the public and to disabled persons.
2. Out-of-cycle grant applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis only.
3. Grant Application form must be typed and filled in completely.
4. Multiple events by the same organization must be separate and distinct applications with separate summaries and budgets.
5. All event expenditures are on a reimbursement basis only. No funds will be forwarded in anticipation of the receipt of an invoice.
6. A complete **detailed** project budget must be submitted that includes all expenses, media placements with corresponding costs and other promotional expenses.
7. The complete detailed project budget must include all revenues.
8. TDC funds granted to recipients must be used for an activity, service, venue or event that has as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be scored by members of the Tourist Development Council in five (5) categories with a maximum score of one hundred (100) points per applicant.

I. Commitment to the Expansion of Tourism in Clay County – Maximum 25 points

Evidence that the event serves to attract out-of-county visitors generating overnight stays; will be marketed to the fullest extent possible in an effective and efficient manner; demonstrates a willingness of the organizer to work with the tourism industry; commits to develop other funding sources in subsequent years.

II. Out-of-County Promotion – Maximum 25 points

The out-of-county advertising is well thought out and detailed to show the potential broad awareness of the event in out-of-market media.

III. Soundness of Proposed Project – Maximum 20 points

The extent to which the project has clearly identified objectives; has a realistic timetable for implementation; has additional funding sources available that will be utilized; will accomplish its stated objectives.

IV. Stability and Management Capacity – Maximum 15 points

A proven record or demonstrated capacities of the organization to successfully develop resources, effectively plan, organize and implement the proposed event.

V. Quality of Uniqueness of Proposed Project – Maximum of 15 points

Extent to which the event attracts residents and visitors to Clay County that is of significant merit and that, without TDC funding assistance, would not take place in Clay County.

Reimbursement Procedures

A representative or designee from your organization MUST submit the following materials in the order listed for reimbursement **within 60 days** of the event:

- (1). Signed and notarized copy of Reimbursement Affidavit (included with the application).
- (2). Duplicate of all advertisements. "Paid for by Clay County Tourist Development Tax Funds" must be visible on all advertising. Attach copy of newspaper, magazine or professional periodicals showing coverage of event. If radio or TV coverage is used they also must say "Paid for by Clay County Tourist Development Tax Funds" in the announcement (submit duplicate of tape, CD or DVD used.)

Attach copy of written ad approval to paperwork submitted for reimbursement.

- (3). Copy of cancelled checks (back and front), Bank Statement or Credit Card Billing Statement and paid invoices must be provided as proof of payment. Invoices must be attached to checks or you will not receive reimbursement.

The above items must be submitted WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER THE EVENT before reimbursement will be made.

**Submit ALL reimbursement materials to:
Wanda Mears, TDC Recording Secretary,
3rd floor, Administration Building or mail to:
Wanda Mears, TDC
477 Houston Street, P.O. Box 1366
Green Cove Springs, FL 32043.**

After submitting the above materials, your request will be forwarded to the Clay County Finance Department for processing and reimbursement. If all materials are in order, a check should be issued from the Finance Department in about 30 days. You may call Wanda Mears at (904)541-3829 or email her at wanda.mears@co.clay.fl.us if you have any questions. Any funds received will be subject to audit by the County auditor or their designee.



**CLAY COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
GRANT REIMBURSEMENT AFFIDAVIT
(TO BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 60 DAYS AFTER THE EVENT)**

I _____, AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE
OF _____, VERIFY THAT THE ATTACHED
INVOICES ARE DUE AND PAYABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GRANT
APPROVED FOR \$ _____ BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ON _____.

SIGNED _____

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS _____ DAY OF
_____ 200____.

NOTARY SIGNATURE:

COMMISSION EXPIRES:

APPROVED FOR PAYMENT BASED ON ATTACHMENTS:

Fritz Behring, County Manager

Date

Post Event Comments

Thank you, in advance, for taking the time to answer the three questions below. The Tourism Office is always looking for ways to make improvements and strive to ensure that your experience in working with us is a pleasant one.

Sincerely,
Jaclyn D. Slaybaugh, Director
Clay County Tourism Division

1. What worked well for your event in Clay County?

2. What didn't work well?

3. What could we do to make your event more successful?