

August 4, 2018

Mayor Treece and City Council Members
City of Columbia
710 E. Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201

REF: Annual Convention & Visitors Bureau Tourism Development Program Update

Dear Mayor & Council,

On behalf of the Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board, this letter serves as the annual update on the CVB's Tourism Development Program, which is funded through a portion of the Columbia Lodging Tax. Applications are made for use of these funds by for-profit and not-for-profit organizations for assistance to develop new, or expand existing festivals and events that generate overnight visitation in Columbia hotels, provide an economic impact and have potential for future growth. There are currently five different funding categories: Signature Series, Festivals & Events, Sports Events, Attraction Development and Community Sponsorships.

In FY2018, \$267,724 was awarded to 33 applications. Six of those applications were from our Signature Series events: True/False Film Festival, Roots N Blues N BBQ Festival, Show-Me STATE GAMES, Art in the Park, MU Concert Series, and Citizen Jane Film Festival. These are Columbia's largest and oldest festivals that have been funded through the tourism development fund for over 10 years. They are considered "iconic" to Columbia and a majority of them generate national press coverage for the community. The six events received a total of \$90,000.

There was one Festival & Events (TDFE) application in 2018. The We Always Swing Jazz Series received \$7,500 to assist with entertainment and promotion expenses. Now in its 24th year, this event features over 14 different musical & educational jazz events starting in September very year and go through the month of April. Other special events are held during the month of April which is National Jazz Month. They also collaborated with the Citizen Jane Film Festival, the Unbound Book Festival and the MU School of Music. Additionally, the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) received \$12,500 to assist with costs of competitive bid fees for providing sponsorship support of the Missouri State High School Music Festival. For more than 60 years this event has been held on the Mizzou campus and brings in over 10,000 high schools students over the course of three days. The city of Columbia won this five-year bid to host the festival during the 2018 -2022 school years.

There were two Sports Development (SDF) applications in FY2018. The Columbia Swim Club received \$10,000 to host the SPEEDO Sectional Championships in March 2018. This met brings in over 700 swimmers and 110 coaches from Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska and Illinois. The three day event generates over 1,800 hotel room nights for Columbia and is on track to become an annual event during the month of March. The Missouri Basketball Coaches

Association was awarded \$10,000 to host the Norm Stewart Classic. This event is also held during a low occupancy time for hotels, in December, and brings in 24 boys & girls varsity high school teams from across the state of Missouri to play basketball for 48 straight hours. All of the games are 'live-streamed' and carried on ESPN3.

The Attraction Development fund is used for the development and/or enhancement of attractions that increase tourism and have potential to generate overnight visitation. In FY18, there was one ADF application received from the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture (on behalf of the Friends of the Farm Partnership). The request was \$75,000 for the construction of a year-round Event Pavilion at the new Clary-Shy Agriculture Park. The CVB Board has approved funding in \$25,000 incremental disbursements based on completion of construction phases, but no funds were paid in FY2018 and the funding recommendation will come to Council for final approval in FY2019.

Community Sponsorships became part of the Tourism Development Program in 2013. These are events or promotions targeted at residents and/or the community that don't generate a great deal of room nights, if any, but do provide a means to increase awareness of Columbia as a tourism destination. During FY2018, the CVB received 23 event applications and awarded a total of \$53,000. Some of these events were: Unbound Book Festival, 9th Street Summerfest, Heritage Festival, Missouri Open Senior Softball Tournament, 2018 Bike MO, Mid-American Disc Golf Tournament and Fire in the Sky. Funds are used to support event promotion/marketing and entertainment costs.

During FY2018, the CVB contracted with the University Of Missouri Office Of Research for \$14,908 to conduct an economic impact study of the True/False Film Fest, as well as a visitor profile study of the Citizen Jane Film Festival. As many festivals and events are partially financed by public tax support, these third-party studies are important in identifying their positive impact on the local community. We will continue to use these surveys as a tool to assess and evaluate festivals & events every two to three years.

In closing, \$425,000 has been appropriated in the CVB's FY2019 budget for tourism development as we anticipate requests for use of tourism dollars will continue throughout the next fiscal year. On behalf of the CVB Advisory Board, thank you for your time and service & commitment to the city of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Teri Weise, CTA
Chair, CVB Advisory Board

cc: CVB Advisory Board Members
CVB Director - Amy Schneider, CTA
City Manager - Mike Matthes, CTA
City Clerk - Sheela Amin, CTA