

August 5, 2020

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

REF: Convention & Visitors Bureau Tourism Development Program Annual Update

Dear Mayor & Council,

On behalf of the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) 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 submitted and considered for use of these funds by for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. The funds are used with developing or expanding attractions as well as festivals and events that generate overnight visitation in Columbia hotels and have a positive economic impact to the community.

During the FY2020 budget process, \$425,000 was appropriated for the Tourism Development Program which currently has five different application categories: Signature Series, Festivals & Events, Sports Events, Attraction Development and Community Sponsorships.

In FY2020 the CVB received 33 applications with a funding total of \$385,000. Six applications were for Signature Series events: True/False Film Fest, Roots N Blues Festival, Show-Me STATE GAMES, Art in the Park, We Always Swing Jazz Series, and MU Concert Series. These events received a total of \$60,000 and are Columbia's largest and most established festivals that have been funded through the Tourism Development Fund for many years and generate national press coverage for the community.

Two Festival & Event applications were received in 2020 for a total of \$22,500. The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) received \$12,500 for sponsorship and support of the State High School Music Festival, which brings in over 10,000 high schools students to the Mizzou campus over the course of three days. The Unbound Book Festival received \$10,000. Over the last four years, this festival has expanded from two days to four days with over 50 authors and poets featured. In addition to the visiting authors, the festival continues to attract an increasing numbers of visitors from outside Boone County.

Six Sports Development applications were received in FY2020 for a total of \$87,500. Funds were used to support MSHSAA's Missouri State High School Wrestling Championships, Football Championships, and Cross County Championships, the American Jr. Golf Association (AJGA) Columbia Junior Championships, the Norm Stewart Classic and the National Middle School Basketball Association 2020 Missouri Championships.

In FY20, there was one Attraction Development application received from the Columbia Parks & Recreation Department for \$75,000. The funds will be used to partially support construction of an indoor race headquarters building, including walkways, utilities, and landscaping for the Gans Creek Cross Country course.

300 South Providence Road Columbia, MO 65203

During FY2020, 18 community event sponsorship applications were awarded a total of \$28,805. These are for events targeted to the entire community that don't necessarily generate overnight stays in hotels, but do increase quality of life and awareness of Columbia as a tourism destination. Some of these events were Harvest Hootenanny, SPLAT Jr. Obstacle Course Mud Run, Boone Dawdle, Columbia Rugby Sectional Championships, 2020 Wild & Scenic Film Fest and Fire in the Sky. Funds are used to support event promotion, marketing and entertainment costs.

And finally, the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic has been challenging for many of the events mentioned. Five events were postponed to a later date and 10 events had to cancel entirely. Any tourism development funds paid out have been returned to the CVB or will roll-over to the 2021 scheduled event as reviewed and discussed with event organizers, CVB staff and the CVB Advisory Board.

Thank you for your time and service to the city of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Heather Hargrove
Chair, CVB Advisory Board

cc: John Glascock, City Manager
Sheela Amin, City Clerk
Amy Schneider, CVB Director
CVB Advisory Board Members