

August 5, 2019

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 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 and have an economic impact to the community.

During the FY2019 budget process, \$425,000 was appropriated for the Tourism Development Program to fund events in five different categories: Signature Series, Festivals & Events, Sports Events, Attraction Development and Community Sponsorships. The CVB received 40 applications in FY2019, and a total of \$346,000 was awarded.

Five (5) applications were for Signature Series events: True/False Film Fest, Roots N Blues N BBQ Festival, Show-Me STATE GAMES, Art in the Park, and MU Concert Series. These events received a total of \$90,000. 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.

There were three (3) Festival & Events applications in 2019. The "We Always Swing" Jazz Series received \$7,500 to assist with entertainment and promotion expenses. Now in its 25th year, this event features over 14 different musical & educational jazz events starting in September and continuing through the month of April, which is National Jazz Month. The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) received \$12,500 for community 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 city of Columbia won this five-year bid to host the festival during the 2018 -2022 school years. Additionally, Big BAM (Bike Across Missouri) received \$7,500 for promotions and marketing of the 2019 event, which had approximately 300 cyclists participate in the 5-day event that started and ended in Columbia.

Six (6) Sports Development applications were received in FY2019. A few of those events included the Columbia Swim Club, which received \$10,000 to host the SPEEDO Sectional Championships in March 2019. This three-day event brings in over 700 swimmers and 110 coaches from Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska and Illinois and 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 State High School Activities Association received \$25,000 for sponsorship support of the Missouri State High School State Wrestling Championships and \$15,000 for the Missouri State High School Football Championships. Both were done through a competitive bid process.

300 South Providence Road Columbia, MO 65203

The CVB Board also reviewed and recommended funding for two new events; the American Jr. Golf Association (AJGA) Columbia Junior Championships and the National Middle School Basketball Association 2020 Missouri Championships. These events occur in 2020, but because of a competitive bid process the recommendation for funding occurred in FY2019 and will come out of FY2020 appropriated funds.

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 FY19, there was one Attraction Development application received from the State Historical Society of Missouri's Center for Missouri Studies (SHSMO) for the Welcome & Information Center inside the lobby of their new 76,000 sq. ft. facility currently under construction. The Welcome Center is the primary entry location for all visitors and is the greatest opportunity to demonstrate Columbia hospitality to our visitors. SHSMO has over 4,000 visitors each year and approximately 2,700 researchers with 20% of them coming from outside Boone County. They also host more than 80 events (presentations, tours, workshops, and public programs) each year attracting over 3,000 attendees, and its National History Day brings in over 6,000 students from across Missouri.

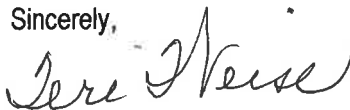
Additionally, the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture (on behalf of the Friends of the Farm Partnership) received \$25,000 for the Clary-Shy Agriculture Park. This was the first installment payment of the \$75,000 they were awarded in FY2018. The remaining two installment payments of \$25,000 will be paid upon completion of construction phase two and three.

Community Event Sponsorships are for events or promotions targeted at residents and/or the community that do not necessarily generate overnight stays in hotels but do increase quality of life and awareness of Columbia as a tourism destination. During FY2019, 24 event applications were awarded a total of \$53,500. Some of these events were: Unbound Book Festival, 9th Street Summerfest, Heritage Festival, Hot Summer Nights, Harvest Hootenanny, Family Fun Fests, Mid-American Disc Golf Tournament and Fire in the Sky. Funds are used to support event promotion, marketing and entertainment costs.

During FY2019, the CVB contracted with the University Of Missouri Office of Research for \$4,908 to conduct an economic impact study of the True/False Film Fest. 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 and events every two to three years.

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

Sincerely,



Teri Weise, CTA
Chair, CVB Advisory Board

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