

Tourism and Quality of Life Enhancement Grant Program

Franklin County, Pennsylvania

2015 CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Franklin County has established a grant program to support the county's tourism efforts and develop the county's quality of life related assets. The purpose of this grant program is to enhance the tourism experience, retain and increase visitation and overnight stays within Franklin County, improve the county as a destination market for leisure travel, and to provide bike and walking trails which benefit the community and enhance the quality of life for county residents. Awards are granted annually on the basis of merit as determined by the Franklin County Grant Review Committee and administered by the Franklin County Commissioners.

CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES:

1. Grants may be awarded to any nonprofit organization or municipality located within Franklin County whose mission and operations are related to tourism or the improvement of quality of life experiences for county residents. Grants may be awarded in the following project categories:
 - ✓ *Bike and Walking/Hiking Trails that will improve and enhance tourism, connect historic and/or tourism attractions, and promote overnight stays within Franklin County.*
 - ✓ *Preservation and Enhancement of Historic Assets that include capital improvements that will preserve, restore, improve or develop historic assets that benefit tourism and promote overnight stays within Franklin County.*
 - ✓ *Bike and Walking/Hiking Trails that will enhance the quality of life experiences of county residents and be a benefit to the community.*

2. Grants are awarded on an annual basis, with the first year of 2015 being the exception with two grant funding rounds. The schedule for the second round of the 2015 Franklin County Tourism and Quality of Life Enhancement Grant Program is as follows:
 - ✓ *Deadline for applications to be submitted: October 2, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.*
 - ✓ *Awards will be announced no later than the end of 2015.*

3. Award amounts must be appropriately utilized within 12 months of formal notification of award. Grants payments will be distributed when requests for payments are made by the entity. Requests for payments shall include:
 - ✓ *a written request for payment,*
 - ✓ *copies of invoices verifying the expenditures, and*
 - ✓ *a brief project update.*

The County reserves the right to request additional information to substantiate expenditures.

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4. Grant requests shall be submitted to:

Franklin County Planning Office
218 North Second Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
717-261-3855
planning@franklincountypa.gov

5. Awardees shall publicly acknowledge the Franklin County Tourism & Quality of Life Enhancement Grant Program, as administrator of the program, through all reasonable vehicles as a stipulation of accepting such awards. This includes recognition of funding on printed media, social media pages, websites and any other media that might be engaged utilizing grant funds. This acknowledgment shall incorporate the Franklin County seal. An electronic version of the seal is available. To obtain a copy please contact:

Franklin County Planning Office
218 North Second Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
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6. If awardees anticipate that the grant funds will not be appropriately utilized within 12 months of formal notification of award, awardees must inform the Planning Department in writing at least 60 days prior to the end of the grant period to either request an extension or return to Franklin County the entire amount that has not been appropriately utilized along with any interest accrued accompanied by an explanation of why the funds were not used.
7. As a condition of accepting the grant, awardees agree to provide adequate proof that the funds received were used for their intended purpose. A final project report is required no later than 30 days after grant expiration and must include:
- ✓ *Documentation regarding how the grant funds were utilized,*
 - ✓ *Itemized list of expenses with copies of invoices or cancelled checks,*
 - ✓ *A summary of the completed project including any outcomes measured,*
 - ✓ *A certification letter executed by a principal of the entity that received the grant attesting to the fact that the grant funds were used for the purpose awarded, and*
 - ✓ *If a grant was for a capital project, photos of the completed project must be included in the final report.*

Ineligible expenses will not be reimbursed.

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8. Grant recipients shall abide by all local, state, and federal laws and regulations and agree to furnish all receipts and a certification letter to verify the expenditure of any grant funds received. In addition, grant recipients understand that the expenditure of grant funds received may be subject to audit and/or further verification and agree to cooperate with any such audit or verification process.
9. Grant applications shall be typewritten. Handwritten applications will not be considered by the grant committee and the grant committee is not responsible for contacting the applicant to request re-submission of a typewritten application.
10. Applicants must complete the Tourism and Quality of Life Enhancement Grant Program Application which is available at the following locations.

Franklin County Planning Office
218 North Second Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
717-261-3855
planning@franklincountypa.gov
www.franklincountypa.gov

11. An applicant may not file more than one grant request per year.
12. Recipients of prior Tourism and Quality of Life Enhancement Grant awards who have not submitted required receipts and supporting documentation as outlined in the program guidance by the end of the grant award period shall be ineligible to apply for future grants until said documentation is submitted and approved. Exception is made for approved extensions of the grant as detailed in Paragraph 6.
13. Grants may be awarded to recipients for multiple years.
14. Recipients of prior Tourism and Quality of Life Enhancement Grant awards who have received extensions approved by the County under Paragraph 6 shall be eligible to apply for subsequent awards during the extension period. Awardees whose extensions were not approved are not eligible for further funding under this announcement.
15. The grant committee reserves the right to approve or reject an extension request and the decision of the committee or its designated representative(s) shall be final and binding upon all parties.
16. Applicants that align their project goals with the County's Greenway and Open Space Plan and the County's Comprehensive Plan and collaborate with other tourism-related entities, nonprofits and local municipalities will be given preferential consideration when awarding

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grants. Both documents are available on the Franklin County Planning Department website:
http://franklincountypa.gov/index.php?section=departments_planning

17. Projects and improvements to physical assets that are ready for construction will receive priority consideration when awarding grants.
18. Although projects and improvements to physical assets will receive priority consideration when awarding grants, “soft costs” are an eligible expense for grant awards. “Soft costs” may consist of feasibility and planning studies and engineering and design. This is not an all-inclusive list of eligible expenditures. Grant requests for soft costs from organizations or municipalities that provide matching funds or in-kind support will receive priority consideration in comparison to other grant requests for soft costs.
19. Projects must comply with applicable municipal, state, and federal laws, rules, regulations, guidelines, ordinances, etc. Projects must also have the support of local residents and the local municipality.
20. It shall be the sole responsibility of any grant recipient to be observant and adhere to the prescribed deadlines relative to the appropriate utilization of any such grant. Neither the Franklin County Commissioners, nor the grant committee, shall be responsible for monitoring such deadlines or informing any grant recipient of an impending or expired deadline. Failure of a grant recipient to comply with the deadline relative to a grant will subject said recipient to the covenants and provisions contained in these Criteria and Guidelines.
21. Applicants should not assume that they will be awarded a grant on an annual basis, nor should they consider these tourism and quality of life enhancement grants a permanent addition to their budget.
22. The Franklin County Board of Commissioners shall establish available funding for this program on an annual basis. 2015 funding thresholds include:
 - ✓ *\$225,000 is available for grants for bike and walking/hiking trails and preservation and enhancement of historic assets which relate to enhancing the tourism experience, visitations and overnight stays within Franklin County.*
 - ✓ *\$125,000 is available for bike and walking/hiking trails that do not need to relate to tourism enhancement but shall enhance the quality of life experiences for county residents and be a benefit to the local community.*

PLEASE NOTE THAT ONE ELECTRONIC COPY OF EACH APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED DEADLINE IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED, AND AS NOTED IN §9 ABOVE, HANDWRITTEN APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. THE COUNTY RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REQUEST PAPER COPIES BE PROVIDED.

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FRANKLIN COUNTY TOURISM & QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENT GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE:

1. The Tourism Grant Review Committee shall be comprised of five (5) members:

- ✓ *Franklin County Administrator,*
- ✓ *Assistant County Administrator,*
- ✓ *Fiscal Director,*
- ✓ *Planning Director, and*
- ✓ *One (1) representative from the Franklin County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors appointed annually by the Franklin County Commissioners to serve a one-year term. This representative shall only review and participate in the decision-making process for applications which relate to enhancing tourism.*

In the event that a member of the Tourism & Quality of Life Grant Review Committee serves on the board of an applicant organization or event, or is affiliated in another manner, it is mandatory that said member recuse himself/herself from the review and/or decision-making process of that specific application.

2. The committee will review all grant applications and announce the awards (TBD).
3. Grant awards shall be presented to each recipient by the Franklin County Commissioners.
4. Nothing shall prevent the Franklin County Tourism Enhancement Grant Review Committee from withholding part or all of the grant funds available for annual awards should the committee determine that insufficient requests have been made justifying the full distribution of those funds.
5. The Franklin County Commissioners may enhance, amend, or modify the grant criteria and guidelines as needed.

The application may be found here.