

# **CITY OF SURPRISE TOURISM FUND APPLICATION PROCESS**

## **Tourism Fund Purpose**

The purpose of the City of Surprise's Tourism Fund is to promote eligible tourism activities within the City of Surprise. Eligibility is defined broadly to encourage wide participation and innovative proposals. The tourism fund is generated by the monetary source derived from the City's share of sales tax collected through overnight stays within the City of Surprise (Bed Tax Rates). Any use of the funds must be approved by Surprise City Council.

Tourism promotion fund applications will be evaluated and awarded for the marketing or operations of destination oriented events or projects designed to attract tourists to the City of Surprise and will be distributed on a reimbursement basis.

The desired outcome of activities funded with bed tax revenue is to increase economic activity in the City of Surprise resulting from tourists.

## **Program Key Initiatives**

- Promote the city of Surprise as a tourist destination
- Drive year-round destination oriented travel to Surprise
- Maximize the economic return on destination-based public and private investments in Surprise
- Provide entertainment or cultural enrichment for Surprise visitors and residents
- Provide support to events that generate hotel room nights in Surprise or increase tourism-related revenue
- Provide support to destination-based development

## **Approved use of Funds**

Funds available through the program must be used in the following areas:

- Marketing of event or project
- Event entertainment
- Direct operational costs of event or project

All costs submitted for reimbursement must include a detailed receipt or invoice from the original vendor.

The intent of the funds to be reimbursed must be indicated within the application and approved during the process. Any changes to the approved reimbursable funds must be requested in writing and approved by the City of Surprise Sports and Tourism Department.

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### Fund Restrictions

Funds cannot be used for:

- Any salary supplements, staffing costs, or any personnel payments.
- Any costs associated with the sale of alcohol.
- If applicant is requesting reimbursement for operational lodging or meals, approval will only be considered for Surprise hotels and restaurants.

### Pre-qualifications: Eligibility & Requirements

The following items will be required to pre-qualify for the Tourism Fund. If an applicant doesn't meet all of the pre-qualifications, the application will not move forward in the process and will not be reviewed. Applicants will be notified if they don't meet the requirements and can resubmit for future consideration.

- Application requests will only be considered if they support at least one of the City's Tourism Strategic Plan's focus areas:
  - **Events and Entertainment**
    - Any special activity including sporting events, tournaments, festivals, arts & cultural events that attract visitors from outside the city limits and support the economic vitality of the community.
  - **Marketing that would promote Surprise Tourism**
    - Any type of advertising, branding or promotional opportunity that would strategically market Surprise as an intentional sports and tourist destination.
  - **Tourism Based Partnership and Facility Development**
    - Any project, agreement or study that would enhance tourism events and/or lead to the development of permanent facilities or attractions that will increase visitor spending and generate room nights.
- Any function/event/facility of the approved funding must be held within the City of Surprise boundaries and/or promote Surprise, exceptions may be made for mega-events that provide a state or regional benefit.
- The activity must be completely inclusive in nature and provide reasonable accommodations for those with special needs.

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### Evaluation

Funding approval and allocation amount will be based off of the following impact areas in conjunction with the event or project meeting the strategic priorities of the City of Surprise:

- Surprise hotel nights generated
- Economic impact to Surprise
- Attendance at the event
- Regional or national recognition
- Long term benefits to the community
- Evaluation of proposed business/marketing plan and historical event reports

### Application Process & Timeline

- **Applicants must provide:**
  - The entire application must be completed for consideration including the following supporting documents:
    - Proposed business plan including a budget and marketing plan
    - Business license or 501 C 3 status
    - Historical event report(s) which include final budget, balance sheet, attendance figures, economic impact information and examples of marketing materials
    - Professional references
    - Proof of ability to obtain general liability insurance with minimum policy limits of \$1 Million per occurrence and \$2 Million aggregate
    - Requestor must obtain all legally required permits, licenses, insurance and city approvals.
- **Timeline:**
  - Completed application must be submitted at least **6 months prior** to event
  - The Sports & Tourism Department will screen applications for qualifications, review and recommend action on application (One - Two Months)
  - Recommended applications must receive final approval from Surprise City Council (One –Two Months depending on submission timing, City Council meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month)
  - The Sports and Tourism Department will notify all applicants of the status as well as any awarded amounts

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### Funding Disbursement and Timeline:

- Funding amount: **no more than 50% of total event/project expense budget will be approved** for reimbursement, unless approved by City Council. Estimated expense budget (includes total operating and marketing expenses, not to include staffing costs) and requested funding amount must be submitted during application process. Final budget will be verified before reimbursement is disbursed.
- If requested funding disbursement amount is greater than 50% of the total Tourism Contingency Fund, Sports and Tourism Staff will notify City Council during the review process and Council will have final approval of the disbursement amount.
- Applicant must submit a detailed list of items to be reimbursed. All items must qualify as an approved use of funds and must be approved by City Council.
- All tourism funds will be reimbursed after final report and documentation has been received and verified by the Sports and Tourism Department.
- Final report must include:
  - Fully completed final report submission form with supporting documents
  - Detailed receipts or invoices from the original vendor

### Timeline:

- Applicant must submit the completed final report within 90 days of the event or project completion.
- Sports and Tourism staff will review and verify all submitted final report documents within 60 days of the submission.
- Approved reimbursements will be issued within 60 days from the final review and approval.

### Final Notes:

- The City of Surprise holds the right to deny any application solely based upon the nature of the event or project. The more information provided within the application will give the reviewers the best illustration of your candidacy for the funding.
- Any changes to the scope of project/event or to the budget of any approved proposals must be made in writing and approved.
- If the project/event is cancelled by the applicant, funds will not be approved for reimbursement.
- If the project/event is cancelled due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the event must be rescheduled for another mutually agreed upon date in order to receive approved funding.

# CITY OF SURPRISE TOURISM FUND APPLICATION PROCESS

## **Contact Info:**

For any questions regarding the Tourism Fund Application, please contact:

Tara Combs

623.222.2239

[Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov](mailto:Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov)

Please mail or drop off applications to:

City of Surprise

Sports & Tourism Department

15930 N. Bullard Ave.

Surprise, AZ 85374

# CITY OF SURPRISE TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

## I. Application Checklist

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Please ensure all of the following documents are included with the application when submitted. If you are unable to provide information for one of the categories/requirements, please note in your application. The more information provided within the application will give the reviewers the best illustration of your candidacy for funding.

- Completed and signed Tourism Fund Application (Page 1 and 2)
- Narrative proposal as defined in Section V (Page 3)
- Business license (for-profit entities) or 501(c)(3), (4), or (6) status letter (non-profits).
- Detailed project budget for event outlining:
  1. Proposed use of Tourism Funds and matching funds associated with request.
  2. ALL expenses and revenues for entire project (including those not associated with this funding request).
- Event marketing and media plan detailing all types of media, names of publications, stations, websites, ad sizes, costs, impressions, audience, and other relevant information.
- Professional references (at least two) with contact information.
- Proof of ability to obtain general liability insurance with minimum policy limits of \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million aggregate.
- For at least one prior event, provide a historical event report including final budget, balance sheet, attendance figures, economic impacts, and examples of marketing materials.

## II. Applicant Signature

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*I attest the information in this application is accurate, that I am an Agent authorized to represent the Organization and I understand the funds requested, if granted, will go to the Organization. I have contacted the City of Surprise and will meet all necessary requirements including, but not limited to, insurance, business licensing, permitting and reporting requirements. If my activity is funded I agree to use the approved City of Surprise logo in all promotional material.*

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Name of Activity or Program

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Date of Program

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Organization Name

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Organization Representative Name

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Organization Representative Signature

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Date

For any questions regarding the Tourism Fund Application, please contact:

Tara Combs – 623.222.2239 | [Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov](mailto:Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov)

Submit application via email ([Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov](mailto:Tara.Combs@surpriseaz.gov)) or mail/drop-off applications to:  
City of Surprise Sports and Tourism Department  
15930 N. Bullard Ave., Surprise, AZ 85374

# CITY OF SURPRISE TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

## III. Organization Information

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Organization Name

Organization Contact Name

Organization Contact Title

Contact Phone

Contact Email

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

Applicant Status (Check one):  Non-Profit

For-Profit

Public Agency

## IV. Event / Project Information

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Event Name

Event Type (Ex. Sport tournament, conference, arts / music)

Event Date(s)

Event Location / Address

Estimated Event Attendance

Estimated Hotel Stays (Total Nights)

Amount Requested (\$) – Max 50% of Budget

Total Project Budget (\$)

Which Surprise Tourism Strategic Plan focus area does the event or project support? (Check one or more)

Events and entertainment

Marketing that would promote Surprise tourism

Tourism based partnership and facility development

*Application continued on next page.*

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## TOURISM FUND APPLICATION

### **V. Narrative Proposal of Project and Economic Impact**

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In no more than three pages (single spaced, 1" margins, 12 pt font), address the following items. NOTE: The numbered header below must be included in the narrative proposal, but not the description and instructions following the header. For example, please include "A. Project Description" above the relevant section.

#### **A. Project Description**

- Describe the event including purpose, activities, vendors used, target audience, market origin of attendees, locations / venues for advertising, source of matching funds, etc.
- Explain how tourism funding is critical to the success of your event / project.

#### **B. Support for Surprise's Tourism Strategic Goals**

- Identify one or more of Surprise's tourism strategic goals – (1) events and entertainment; (2) marketing to support Surprise tourism; or (3) tourism-based partnership and facility development – supported by the event / project.
- Describe how the event / project supports the selected tourism strategic goal(s).

#### **C. Estimated Attendance and Hotel Stays / Accommodations**

- Outline total attendance estimates including how many attendees fall into the following categories – (1) staying overnight in paid accommodations; (2) staying overnight in unpaid (e.g. family / friends) accommodations; (3) Staying only for the day and traveling 50+ miles
- Outline how many estimated hotel nights are generated including if there is any minimum room nights guaranteed, or recommendation / requirements for participants to stay in Surprise accommodations.
- Explain why the date was chosen for the event. If the event is to be held when the City's occupancy is already high, describe how the event will extend visitor stays or explain why a move to a lower occupancy date is not feasible.

#### **D. Economic Impact and Community Benefit**

- Discuss two or more of the following items to demonstrate that the project helps build Surprise as a tourist destination or provide benefits to the community.
  - o Provide an estimated economic impact projection and discuss any forecasted increase in sales tax revenue.
  - o Discuss how the event or marketing plan will attract regional or national media.
  - o Describe how your project impacts the community's efforts to increase visual or performing arts, host regional sporting and outdoor recreation activities, and / or heighten awareness of area's natural amenities.
  - o Discuss any long-term impacts on the community