



CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM & GUIDELINES

Program Description

The Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) annually budgets funds dedicated for capital tourism development projects. The Capital Grants Program (CGP) has been established to stimulate economic growth by supporting non-profit visitor attractions of Sampson County and in developing new visitor attractions or enhancing and restoring existing structures or projects.

Primary consideration will be given to those projects that have the greatest potential for positive economic impact for tourism within the County. Highest priority will be given to those projects which are more likely to promote and generate travel from outside Sampson County and lead to overnight stays among local lodging establishments.

Funds may be granted for projects such as new bricks and mortar construction, maintenance and preservation of historic attractions, cultural and historical acquisitions, conservation of artifacts, or other projects that enhance or improves the CVB's ability to promote tourism and that assists in attracting visitors to Sampson County.

The Sampson County CVB Board reserves the right to allow Capital Grant funds to accrue from year to year at their discretion.

Purpose - Capital Funding

Projects performed under this program must be for travel and tourism development only and may not contain or include elements not related to destination development. Projects not adhering to this provision will not be considered. All projects approved for funding must prove that they attract and serve visitors to Sampson County as their primary purpose.

Eligibility - Requirement of Non-profit status

Any legally chartered 501-(c3) non-profit Sampson County organization or chartered municipality representing a visitor attraction, which includes tourism promotion among its major activities, are eligible to apply for a grant under this program. Documentation of legal status, tax exemption, federal identification number, budget, and organizational purpose is required with each application. The organization applying for funds must show that they own the property, and it is not leased by the organization. If a requesting organization does not own the land or the structure to be preserved, changed, or built on a particular site, the owner must provide a properly executed permanent easement for the site, including ingress

and egress, with letter of approval for project. This statement / letter must be attached at the time of the submission of the application. The Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau's Board of Directors reserves the right for the board and staff to create, establish and fund projects that further the overall mission of the CVB that are developed to attract visitors to Sampson County.

Matching Grant Amount

The Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau matching grant formula will be one grant dollar for each dollar spent by the organization, up to \$50,000 per project. Due to the potential number of grant applications received annually, expect that the full amount of your organization's grant request may not be awarded. Typical grant awards average between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Grant awards are capped at \$50,000 per organization, and once this amount has been distributed to an organization, they must sit out of the grant application process for a period of three (3) years from date of final funding from the CVB. Multiple non-profits may not apply for the same project. If the project is for Public Art, the maximum amount of the grant will not exceed \$5,000.

Funding over Multiple Years

The Sampson CVB Board reserves the right to fund projects over multiple years (Not to exceed five years) should the need arise. (Example: An approved project is allocated \$30,000. Funds may be disbursed at \$6,000 for a period of five years.)

Funding in Consecutive Years

Organizations may apply for grants every year that capital funds are available until they reach the \$50,000 cap as stated above. Recipients will be awarded one grant at a time, therefore, giving all eligible organizations equal opportunity for consideration. Should a grant project take more than one fiscal year to complete, it will be classified as "continued," and funding will be carried over for one additional year. Organizations so designated must provide an update to the Sampson County CVB Capital Grants Committee on the continued project of each grant cycle, with status for completion, revised budget, and funding totals.

Pledge of Support

Should an organization be in the fund-raising stage for any tourism-related capital project, and not ready to start construction in the year of the grant application, it is possible to request a resolution of support from the Sampson County CVB to assist in securing the necessary funding and/or grants. Grant applicants must show proof with written documentation that 50% of the project funding has been secured by the time an application is submitted to the Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Application Dates & Deadline for the Receipt of Applications

The Sampson County CVB Capital Grant Committee processes Capital Grant Applications four times per fiscal year (January, April, July, and October) or until such time that the annual allocation is exhausted. Applications may be submitted as follows:

First cycle (December 1st - December 31st) Must be postmarked no later than December 31st for consideration during the 1st cycle.

Second cycle (March 1st - March 31st) Must be postmarked no later than March 31st for consideration during the 2nd cycle.

Third cycle (June 1st - June 30th) Must be postmarked no later than June 30th for consideration during the 3rd cycle.

Fourth cycle (September 1st - September 30th) Must be postmarked no later than September 30th for consideration during the 4th cycle.

Capital Grant applicants must have written approval or a formal resolution of the governing board, relevant municipal government endorsement, and a list providing other contributions to the project. Before an organization can apply for a Capital Grant, they must have a projected budget outline prepared and a business plan for securing funding if not already in place.

Notification of the Grant Awards

Applicants will receive written notice as to the status of their request for matching funds by No later than 30 days of receipt. No information regarding grant status will be given over the phone. The Sampson County CVB reserves the right to refuse any application.

Sampson CVB Participation

The Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau must be recognized for the grant or donation at the project site on donor boards, or through possible room naming opportunities, at ground breakings, and in media articles pertaining to the project. Sampson County CVB Staff and Board Members must be invited to events and activities, as well as any ground breakings or dedication ceremonies related to the project.

Reporting the withdrawal of a project

The grantee must notify the Sampson County CVB in writing for any grant project that has been changed in scope, delayed, or cancelled. Failure to report the withdrawal of an approved project will affect the grantee's application for matching funds in future years. Funds forfeited for allocated projects for any given fiscal year may be distributed to other projects as approved by the Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Disbursement of Funds

Once the project is completed, the grantee will be required to submit the following information along with documentation to the Sampson County CVB staff for reimbursement:

- Final Project Budget
- Copies of invoices and checks
- List of all donors and funding sources
- Documentation of recognition of CVB's contribution to project
- Photographs of completed project.

Grant funds will not be disbursed in advance of the project for any reason. Funds will be issued once final documentation is submitted and is approved by the CGP Committee. Payments are generally made by the Sampson County Finance Office on the 10th and 20th of the month following submission of final documentation.

Tourism Related Asset

The organization must keep the tourism related asset open to the public a minimum of five years after grant funds are awarded, or partial return of grant funds may be requested by the Sampson County CVB.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau is to market and promote Sampson County, its assets, and its industry partners to attract both business and leisure travelers.

Examples of expenses that will not be granted or reimbursed as part of the Sampson County Convention & Visitors Bureau Capital Grant Program:

- Advertising or marketing expenses
- Any publications
- Appearance improvement projects
- Church construction
- Event or festival operational costs
- Familiarization tour expenses
- For-profit organizations
- Funding to individuals
- Housing Projects
- In-kind services by suppliers, vendors or consultants
- Items for resale
- Lodging/travel/entertainment costs
- Municipal Sidewalks
- Municipal Road Construction
- Municipal services or municipal utility improvements
- Municipal Streetscape or Lighting improvements expenditures
- Municipal Water/sewer improvements
- Non-tourism related Wayfinding Signage
- Office equipment: purchasing or leasing.
- Office supplies
- Political projects
- Public or Private School Projects
- Routine administrative costs
- Routine postage and shipping charges
- Salaries for full-time, part-time, temporary employees or contract employees
- Sporting Events
- Telephone, internet, or other communication charges