

Antelope County Promotion and Improvement Guidelines

Overview of Categories and Criteria

Grant funding is available in two different categories.

- *Promotion grants* provide funding for the use of promotions and marketing that encourages and draws tourists and visitors to tourism and travel facilities, events, and attractions in Antelope County. Any non-profit, for-profit, or public use organizations actively involved with tourism events and attractions (including co-sponsored tourism events) are eligible. This grant is not for construction of attractions or other tourism facilities.
- *Capital Improvement grants* differ from promotional grants. It provides funding to existing tourist attractions and recreational facilities in Antelope County that are owned by the public and any nonprofit organization (except parimutuel wagering). This includes planning, constructing, expanding, and improving these attractions. Funds must be for attractions that are open to the public and are of educational, cultural, historical, artistic, or recreational significance. Funds can also be used for acquiring or expanding exhibits for an existing attraction.

Revenues from both funds can be used for printing brochures and rack cards, erecting signs, mass media advertising, and other tourism promotion and marketing. Revenues in the improvement fund can only be used for capital construction and improvements that are owned by the public and any non-profits.

Funding has been made available from the lodging tax revenue collected from rental of sleeping accommodations in Antelope County at both for-profit and non-profit hotels, motels, campgrounds, B&B's, and similar lodging facilities.

Additional Criteria for Grant Assistance

Non-profit, for-profit businesses and services, and other public organizations located within Antelope County may apply for either direct marketing and/or promotional grants or capital improvement grants.

- *Promotion grant* are limited to \$350 per grant. The funding request must be 25 percent or less of the advertising and marketing budget for the specific event or no more than 50 percent of the grant amount, whichever is the larger amount. Organizations may apply for multiple promotion grants when sponsoring multiple events during the calendar year. Promotional funds cannot be used for any permanent structure, maintaining or repair of a permanent structure.
- *Capital Improvement grants* are limited to \$1,750 per grant. Funds must be used to expand or improve existing attractions that are open to the public and are of educational, cultural, historical, artistic, or recreational significance and that promote tourism and/or generate positive visibility for Antelope County. Organizations may apply for the same improvement over multiple years, but no more than once per calendar year.
- *Complete the application form.* Applications are due 30-90 days prior to the event.

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- *Funding* is based on a calendar year from January 1 to December 31 and is discretionary, based upon availability of funds, other anticipated uses, appropriateness, and effectiveness of the proposed use. Multiple year funding for the same improvement will be closely monitored, tracked, and reviewed by the committee and will use its discretion for funding future years.
- *Bids and/or budgets* for promotional grants or improvement grants must be included in the grant's application package. Excluded are operating, maintenance, additional personnel expenses, and any other items that does not conform with the intent of the grant.
- *Grant acknowledgement* "Funded in part by the Antelope County Visitors Promotion (Improvement) Fund" must appear in the events promotion or capital improvement materials.
- *Receipts* are not required but must be made available upon request. If receipts are not provided upon request, no future grant applications will be accepted.
- *Final costs* of the promotion of the event or completion of the improvement project is not required but must be made available to the committee upon request.

The Review Process

The Antelope County Visitors Committee are volunteers who live in the county and volunteer their time, share their knowledge, and provide judgment. It is a five-person committee with at least one member representing the lodging industry who all serve a four-year term. The Committee elects a chairperson, vice-chairperson, and a secretary.

Upon receipt of the application package, the Antelope County Visitors Committee will review the grant application and attachments for completeness of the package and understanding of the grant criteria used in the proposed requested funds. It will also review the previous grants that have been approved or denied by the organization.

Generally, the Chairperson of the Visitors Committee will contact the grant's designated contact person to notify them that the committee has received the application and will also clarify or gather any additional information about the request at that time. The grant package is distributed to the committee by email, with voting and discussions of the grant package completed by all the committee members within several weeks. If a committee member has a conflict of interest, they need to disqualify themselves from voting.

Upon approval or disapproval, the grant package is then forwarded to the Office of the County Clerk, who puts the package on the agenda for the Antelope County Board of Commissioners who will review and finalize the approval or disapproval of the grant. The commissioners' meetings are scheduled for the first and second Tuesdays of each month. Applicants may attend the meeting to provide additional input, as needed. The Office of the County Clerk will notify the grants contact person and funds will be distributed using the information obtained from the application form.