

HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX USE GUIDELINES
UNDER TEXAS STATE LAW AND FUNDING APPLICATION FORM

State Law: By law of the State of Texas, the City of Gonzales collects a Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) from hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts and inns. Under state law, the revenue from the HOT may be used only to directly promote tourism and the hotel and convention hotel industry. **Chapter 351 of the Tax Code states that the use of HOT funds is limited to:**

- a. **Convention Centers and Visitor Information Centers:** the acquisition of sites for and the construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing operation and maintenance of convention facilities or visitor information centers, or both;
- b. **Registration of Convention Delegates:** the furnishing of facilities, personnel, and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants;
- c. **Advertising, Solicitations and Promotions that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry:** advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity;
- d. **Promotions of the Arts that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry:** the encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts that can be shown to have some direct impact on tourism and the hotel/convention industry. The impact may be that the art facility or event can show hotel nights that are booked due to their events or that guests at hotels attend the arts event. Eligible forms of art include instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion picture, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms.
- e. **Historical Restoration and Preservation Activities that Directly Promote Tourism and the Hotel and Convention Industry:** historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitation and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums.
- f. **Sporting Event Expenses that Substantially Increase Economic Activity at Hotels:** Expenses including promotional expenses directly related to a sporting event in which the majority of participants are tourists who substantially increase economic activity at hotels and motels within the city or its vicinity.
- g. **Funding transportation systems for transporting tourists from hotels to and near the city to any of the following destinations:**
 1. the commercial center of the city;
 2. a convention center in the city;
 3. other hotels in or near the city; or
 4. tourist attractions in or near the city.

The law specifically prohibits the use of the local hotel tax to cover the costs for general city transit costs to transport the general public.

- h. **Signage directing tourists to sights and attractions that are visited frequently by hotel guests in the municipality.**

City Policy: The City of Gonzales accepts applications from groups and businesses whose program fits into one or more of the above categories. All requests for funds should be submitted in writing accompanied by the official application two weeks prior to the Tourism Committee Meeting which is held on the second Thursday of the month. The application will be reviewed by the Gonzales Tourism Committee at the earliest possible regularly scheduled meeting. The applicant may be asked to be present at the meeting to answer any questions regarding the application. Applicants will be notified one week prior to the meeting of the time and place for the review. City Council will have final approval for any application requesting over \$2,500.00. The Gonzales Tourism Committee will make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will make the final decision on your request. You will be notified when City Council will address your request. Attendance is required.

Eligibility and Priority for Hotel Tax Funds: Priority will be given to those events and entities based on their ability to generate overnight visitors to Gonzales. The amount that you are requesting should not exceed more than 25 percent of the gross amount of hotel night revenue that you are predicting that will be created or sustained by your event. If an event will not generate any meaningful hotel night activity, it is not eligible for receipt of hotel occupancy tax funds. Events can prove this potential to generate overnight visitors by:

- a) **historic information on the number of room nights used during previous years of the same events;**
- b) **current information on the size of a room block that has been reserved at area hotels** to accommodate anticipated overnight guests attending the event requesting hotel tax funds;
- c) **historical information on the number of guests at hotel or other lodging facilities that attended the funded event; and/or**
- d) **examples of marketing of the programs and activities that are likely to generate encourage overnight visitors** to local lodging properties.

Use of Local Vendors: The Gonzales Tourism Committee encourages all event organizers to patronize Gonzales businesses for food, supplies, materials, printing, etc.

Use of Revenues from Event: A portion of the revenues from any event and/or project receiving any type of funding assistance from the HOT funds should be channeled back into the future costs of operating that same event or the continued operation of the project. No other outside event(s), project, charity, etc., sponsored by the host organization may profit from the City of Gonzales's funding of a particular event.

Supplemental Information Required With Application: Along with the application, please submit the following:

- _____ Proposed Marketing Plan for Funded Event
- _____ Schedule of Activities or Events Relating to the Funded Project

Submit to:

City of Gonzales
Attention: Tourism Advisory Committee
P. O. Box 547
Gonzales, Texas 78629
830-672-2815

For Questions Contact:

Genora C. Young, PCED, BREC
President/CEO
Gonzales Economic Development Corp
P. O. Box 547
Gonzales, Texas 78629
830-672-2815

APPLICATION

Organization Information

Date: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Contact Name: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Web Site Address for Event or Sponsoring Entity: _____

Is your organization: Non-Profit _____ Private/For Profit _____

Tax ID #: _____ Entity's Creation Date: _____

Purpose of your organization: _____

Name of Event or Project: _____

Date of Event or Project: _____

Primary Location of Event or Project: _____

Amount Requested: _____

How will the funds be used? _____

Primary Purpose of Funded Activity/Facility: _____

Percentage of Hotel Tax Support of Related Costs

_____ Note Percentage of Total **Event Costs** Covered by Hotel Occupancy Tax

_____ Note Percentage of Total **Facility Costs** Covered by Hotel Occupancy
Tax for _____ the Funded Event.

_____ Note Percentage of **Staff Costs** Covered by Hotel Occupancy Tax for the
Funded Event.

If staff costs are covered, estimate percentage of time staff spends annually on the
funded event(s) compared to other activities _____

Check Which Categories Apply to Funding Request and Amount Requested Under Each Category:

1. **Convention Center or Visitor Information Center:** construction, improvement, equipping, repairing operation and maintenance of convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or both

2. **Registration of Convention Delegates:** furnishing of facilities, personnel, and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants:

3. **Advertising, Solicitations, Promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates** or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity.

4. **Promotion of the Arts that Directly Enhance Tourism and the Hotel & Convention Industry:** encouragement, promotion, improvement, and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, motion picture, radio, television, tape and sound recording, and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution, and exhibition of these major art forms:

5. **Historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitation** and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums;

6. **Expenses including promotional expenses, directly related to a sporting event in which the majority of participants are tourists who substantially increase economic activity at hotels and motels within the city or its vicinity.**

Sporting Related Event Funding:

If the event is a sporting related function/facility: How many individuals are expected to participate? _____

If the event is a sporting related function/facility: How many of the participants are expected to be from another city or county? _____

If the event is a sporting related function/facility: Quantify how the funded activity will substantially increase economic activity at hotel and motels within the city or its vicinity?

Questions for all Funding Requests:

How many years have you held this Event or Project: _____

Expected Attendance: _____

How many people attending the Event or Project will use Gonzales hotels, motels or bed & breakfasts? _____

How many nights will they stay? _____

Do you reserve a room block for this event at an area hotel and if so, for how many rooms and at which hotels: _____

Please list other years (over the last three years) that you have hosted your Event or Project with amount of assistance given from HOT and the number of hotel rooms used:

City	Month/Year Held	Assistance Amount	Number of Hotel Rooms Used

How will you measure the impact of your event on area hotel activity?

Please list other organization, government entities and grants that have offered financial support to your project: _____

Please check all promotion efforts your organization is coordinating and the amount financially committed to each media outlet;

Paid Advertising _____ Newspaper _____ Radio _____ TV _____

Press Release to Media _____ Direct Mailing to out of town recipients _____

Other _____

What areas does your advertising and promotion reach?

What number of individuals will your proposed marketing reach that are located in another city or county? _____

(If a permanent facility (e.g.museum, visitor center)

Expected Attendance Monthly/Annually: _____(Please note percentage of those in Attendance that are Staying at Area Hotels/Lodging Facilities: _____