



General Guidelines
for
Lodging Tax Funding Support Applicants

As required by the Washington State Legislature, the City of Moses Lake established the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) to support tourism promotion projects within the community. The group's responsibilities include oversight of funding requests aimed at utilizing a portion of the hotel/motel tax revenues that the city receives. These funds are derived from lodging rentals in the area. The purpose of the program is to provide funding to eligible organizations or groups for the purpose of positively impacting tourism in the greater Moses Lake area. Funding of the program and specific awards are dependent on recommendations of the Moses Lake Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) and final decision by the Moses Lake City Council. The City Council may allocate all, none, or a portion of the available funds.

Moses Lake's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) is seeking applications for the next funded year. By State law, the city's lodging tax revenue may only be used to promote tourism pursuant to RCW 67.28. The Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) shall make its recommendations to the Moses Lake City Council following the proposal deadline date as part of the city's annual budget process.

Proposal Deadline: **September 3, 2019** – 5:00 p.m. (received or postmarked)

Mini-Grant Deadline*: **February 1st** – any given year – 5:00 pm (received or postmarked)
*subject to funding availability

Address: Moses Lake Lodging Tax Advisory Committee
 c/o Civic Center Administration Office
 401 S. Balsam Street
 P.O. Box 1579
 Moses Lake, WA 98837

To Receive a Lodging Tax Application Packet:

Download from the city's website: www.cityofml.com

In Person: Visit Administration Office/Civic Center 2nd Floor
401 S. Balsam St.
Moses Lake, WA 98837

Questions: Contact Administration Office
(509) 764-3713

General Guidelines

- Lodging tax revenues under this chapter may be used, directly by any municipality or indirectly through a convention and visitors bureau or destination marketing organization for:
 - (a) Tourism marketing;
 - (b) The marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists;
 - (c) Supporting the operations and capital expenditures of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or a public facilities district created under chapters **35.57** and **36.100** RCW; or
 - (d) Supporting the operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations described under 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3) and 26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(6) of the internal revenue code of 1986, as amended.
- City of Moses Lake considers lodging tax funded proposals from governmental and non-profit organizations.
- The city does not make any multi-year commitments with LTAC funds, however, service providers are not limited or prohibited from making repeat annual requests of the same nature or for projects that span more than one year.
- Proposals must comply with federal, state, and county laws and requirements. NOTE: City of Moses Lake may not use public funds in any way that can be construed as a gift to an individual or organization.
- Proposals must completely address the questions, and all requested supplemental information must be provided.
- Reimbursement: The City has drafted a contract which refers to your application as the scope of work. Payments will be made in accordance with the terms set forth in the contract. All reports, including a budget to actual comparison and the visitor estimate as required by the Washington State Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) will need to be submitted by January 31 after the completion of the contract year.

To be considered, a fully completed and signed original application, plus **FIVE (5) additional complete copies with requested supporting documents**, must be received at the Civic Center Administration Office, 401 S. Balsam Street, P.O. Box 1579, Moses Lake, WA 98837, by the deadline posted each year. A second deadline of February 1st, 5:00 pm, will be offered for those looking for funding subject to fund availability.

Background Information

The Lodging Tax is an existing excise (sales) tax authorized by State law in RCW 67.28, Public Stadium, Convention, Arts and Tourism Facilities.

The City of Moses Lake has imposed an excise tax on charges for lodging by hotels, motels, and similar business enterprises, pursuant to RCW Chapter 82.08 Retail Sales Tax. In Moses Lake, the total tax on lodging is 4% (this includes the original 2% from sales tax and the additional 2% special excise tax).

Moses Lake's Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC)

Per RCW 67.28.1817, the State requires that local governments collecting the lodging tax establish a Lodging Tax Advisory Committee consisting of at least five members:

- The Chair – an elected city council member
- At least two members – persons involved in activities authorized to be funded by revenue received from the Hotel-Motel Tax
- At least two members – representatives of businesses required to collect the tax
- LTAC Committee members are appointed by the Mayor. The Committee's role is advisory in nature, with the Committee's purpose being to advise the City Council on uses of the city's lodging tax when a change in use is proposed. The City Council makes the final decision about how to use the city's lodging tax receipts.
- By state law, lodging tax funds may only be used for tourism promotion and the marketing and operations of special events and festivals and for the acquisition and/or operation, including maintenance, of tourism-related facilities. The following definitions are copied verbatim from RCW 67.28.080.

The Lodging Tax Advisory Committee meets annually, with additional meetings as needed, to review applications and the balance of the lodging tax fund. If you would like to attend the next LTAC meeting, please contact the Administration Department for dates and times at 509-764-3713.

Definitions

- “Acquisition” includes, but is not limited to, siting, acquisition, design, construction, refurbishing, expansion, repair, and improvement, including paying or securing the payment of all or any portion of general obligation bonds, leases, revenue bonds, or other obligations issued or incurred for such purposes.

- “Municipality” means any county, city or town of the State of Washington.
- “Operations” includes, but is not limited to, operation, management and marketing.
- “Tourism” means economic activity resulting from tourists, which may include sales of overnight lodging, meals, tours, gifts, or souvenirs.
- “Tourism promotion” means activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism, including but not limited to advertising, publicizing, or otherwise distributing information for the purpose of attracting and welcoming tourists; developing strategies to expand tourism; operating tourism promotion agencies; and funding marketing of or operation of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists.
- “Tourism-related facility” means real or tangible personal property with a usable life of three or more years, or constructed with volunteer labor that is: (a)(i) Owned by a public entity; (ii) owned by a nonprofit organization described under section 501(c)(3) of the federal internal revenue code of 1986, as amended; or (iii) owned by a nonprofit organization described under section 501(c)(6) of the federal internal revenue code of 1986, as amended, a business organization, destination marketing organization, main street organization, lodging association, or chamber of commerce and (b) used to support tourism, performing arts, or to accommodate tourist activities.

City of Moses Lake Policy and Eligibility Criteria Statement for Use of the Lodging Tax

The revenues received from the city’s hotel/motel tax may be used for only the purposes stated in RCW 67.28.1816.

Evaluation Criteria Used by the LTAC Committee

Awarded Projects Should:

- Generate overnight stays in Moses Lake hotels, motels, bed & breakfasts, and campgrounds (this will enhance regular sales tax as well as regenerate Hotel/Motel tax revenues).
- Encourage support of Moses Lake businesses, restaurants, and attractions.
- Promote the city as a destination place. Recipients are to use the City of Moses Lake logo if the award is for co-sponsored event. If the award is not a co-sponsored event the recipient should note on any advertising material that “Tourism support provided by City of Moses Lake’s Lodging Tax Fund.”
- Attract positive coverage in local, regional, and national media.
- Attract visitors, build new audiences, and stimulate the development of other tourism opportunities.
- Promote the unique attributes of Moses Lake for tourists.
- Support regional tourism planning/promotion.
- Support long-lasting assets, capital facilities/amenities.
- Increase awareness of the city’s amenities, history, facilities, and natural environment.

- Use seed money for innovative, new programs.
- Take an existing program in a new direction.
- Have broad-based community appeal or support.
- Reflect excellent quality in content or programming.
- While matching funds are not required, the amount of additional funds, supplies, materials and staff time an organization brings to an event is a good measure of that organization's commitment to success.

The Successful Applicant should:

- Have a demonstrated history of successful use of grant and/or public funding.
- Have a demonstrated ability to successfully complete the proposed project through effective business practices in the areas of finance, administration, marketing, and production.
- Document and measure the overall economic impact - estimate number of visitors and overnight stays; forecast direct and indirect dollar expenditures by visitors; forecast expected revenue to the project/event and expenditures associated with any public service required.
- Provide a method for evaluating the proposed project upon completion, based upon the above requirements.
- Seek multiple sources of support rather than rely on City of Moses Lake as a sole funding source.
- Work toward total self-sufficiency in funding.
- Encourage volunteer involvement and inter-jurisdictional, corporate, business, and/or civic partnerships.
- Use the hotel/motel tax funds to leverage funds from other sources.

Application Requirements

The attached funding application addresses the following specific areas:

- Eligibility: The applicant has concisely defined the service and or product to be provided and demonstrated how it will do so. The project is in compliance with the State statutes and city guidelines established in this program.
- Project Description: The applicant has submitted a scope of work that describes the project in detail.
- Budget: The project budget includes both revenue and expense categories; all income has been broken out by amount and source, and eligible expenses have be itemized.

Selection Process

After applications are submitted to the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, they will be reviewed and evaluated by committee members and staff for completeness and eligibility. Applicants may be contacted to provide clarification, make corrections, or supply additional information. Applications that do not meet the guidelines will be disqualified and returned. Applicants will be notified of the date, time, and place of this Committee meeting and may be requested to attend.

The Committee's funding recommendation will then be forwarded on to the Moses Lake City Council for final decision. Applicants will be notified following the City Council's decision for funding.

Project Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be utilized in evaluating all proposals.

1. **Tourism Promotion:** Does the project meet the basic state and city requirements for tourism promotion? Will it promote a positive image for the city? Will it attract visitors, build new audiences, and encourage tourist expansion? Will it increase awareness of the city's amenities, history, facilities, and natural environment?
2. **Benefit to the City:** How will this project benefit the people of Moses Lake?
3. **Community Support:** Does the project have broad-based city appeal or support? What is the evidence of need for this project in the city?
4. **Evidence of Partnerships:** What kind and degree of partnership does the project exhibit? Does it exhibit volunteer involvement or inter-jurisdictional, corporate, business, and/or civic support?
5. **Management Capability:** How have you demonstrated an ability to successfully complete the project through effective business practices in the areas of finance, administration, marketing, and production? What are the administrative credentials of paid or volunteer staff or individuals?
6. **Scale of Project:** Is the project of a scale suitable for this funding program? Can the project be implemented by the end of the year?
7. **Application:** Is the application clear, accurate, complete, and neat?

Disclaimer: *The City of Moses Lake reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to fund or not fund any particular project or program for which an application is submitted. The determination of whether to fund a particular project or program will be based upon a number of factors, including, but not limited to, the ability of the program or project to promote tourism in the community, the relative merits of the project or program compared to the applications, and the overall availability of funding. The city is the sole judge of its obligation to fund any particular project or program regardless of its merits under these factors.*