

August 23, 2013

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If you host an event that attracts tourism and supports the Burleson hotel industry, the City opened the application process for those interested in applying for hotel/motel occupancy tax funds. The deadline to file is 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 18.

The guidelines for funding and the application are posted on the City website at [www.burlesontx.com/ed](http://www.burlesontx.com/ed). The City's economic development department is hosting a pre-proposal workshop Thursday, Aug. 29, at 9 a.m. at Burleson City Hall, 141 W. Renfro St. This workshop is meant to allow organizations to learn more about the funding and ask questions to city staff.

City council approved the guidelines and application process Aug. 19. A qualifying event/program has to take place between October 2013 and September 2014 (the City's fiscal year).

The City collects a local hotel occupancy tax, as authorized by the Texas Tax Code Chapter 351, which amounts to a 7 percent tax on each hotel room that is occupied in Burleson. There are four hotels - Days Inn, Best Western, Comfort Suites and America's Best Value Inn – inside the Burleson city limits. The funds the City collects each year are used to support qualifying programs that attract tourists and results in "heads in beds" at local motels. Applicants must show letters of support for the proposed event from the local hotels.

Funds can be awarded for:

- Constructing, maintaining and operating a convention or visitor center;
- Furnishing facilities and personnel for the registration of convention delegates;
- Advertising and promotional programs to attract tourists;
- Encouragement and promotion of the arts;
- Historical restoration and preservation projects and advertising to encourage tourists to visit historic sites and museums;
- Sporting events where the majority of the participants come from out of town;
- Signage directing the public to sites and attractions frequently visited by tourists; and
- Transportation to tourist attractions.

The selection committee will decide if the application meets the standards of the law, is a high quality event, attracts overnight visitors to Burlison, promotes tourism and a positive local economic benefit, and is a special event or a sporting event.

The process includes a post event summary form, reimbursement request, visitor impact statement and hotel tracking form. All forms must be turned in within 45 days after the event. Special event funding events have a three-year cap, unless hotel stays increase. If the event does not increase hotel stays in three years it may be considered a community event and become ineligible for funding.